

A
Serious ADDRESS

To the Members of the
Episcopal Separation in New-England.

OCCASIONED

By Mr. *Wetmore's* Vindication of the
Professors of the Church of England in
Connecticut.

BEING

An *Attempt* to fix and settle these three Points,

I. Whether the Inhabitants of the *British Plantations*
in *America*, those of *New-England* in particular,
are OBLIGED, in *Point of Duty*, by the Laws of
God or Man, to conform to the *Prelatic Church*,
by Law established in the *South Part* of GREAT-
BRITAIN.

II. Whether it be PROPER in *Point of Prudence* for
those who are already settled in such Churches as
have so long subsisted in *New-England*, to forsake
them and go over to *that Communion*.

III. Whether it be LAWFUL for particular Members
of *New-Englisk Churches* to separate from them,
and join in Communion with the *Episcopal As-*
semblies in the Country.

By *Noah Hobart, A. M.*

Pastor of a Church of CHRIST in *Fairfield.*

Prov. xxviii. 31. *He that rebuketh a Man, afterward shall find
more Favour, than he that flattereth with the Tongue.*

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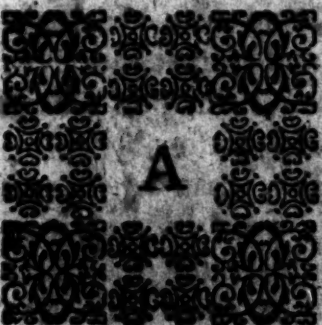
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TO
The Members of the
Episcopal SEPARATION
in *New-England*.

My Brethren,



S I am obliged to you all by the Laws of *Humanity* and the *Christian Religion*, so I look on my self as standing in a *Pastoral Relation* to some of you; such of you, I mean, as have separated from the particular Church of which *the Holy Ghost* hath made me *Overseer*; For I cannot think your forsaking our Communion, without ever giving me an Opportunity to answer and remove those Doubts and Difficulties you laboured under, can dissolve the *sacred Relation* which before subsisted between us. I therefore esteem it my Duty to promote, as far as I am able, the best Good of you

you all; and that particularly by endeavouring to reclaim you from the Error of your present dangerous Ways. This Duty would be much more pleasant to me, if I could discharge it in a Way agreeable to you. I take no Pleasure in *noisy Debate*, much less in *angry Controversy*. And I don't know any Thing but a Sense of Duty, a Desire to promote the Interest of Religion, and your Advantage, that would induce me to expose my self to that *Contempt* and *Reproach* which are too commonly the Consequence of appearing in this Cause; and which I expected when I engaged in it. Some of you can testify for me, that I once stood as high in the Esteem and Friendship of your Party as most of my Brethren in the Ministry in these Parts; and I would gladly use all lawful Means for continuing so: But if encouraging you in dangerous Errors, or neglecting to defend important Truths, be the Price of your Friendship, I must say you hold it too dear; and how greatly soever I value it, I cannot purchase it at this Rate. I had rather be the Object of your Ill-Will for discharging my Duty to you, than be applauded by you for neglecting it.

But why, *My Brethren*, should I be looked on as your *Enemy*, because I tell you the Truth? Or what can justify those severe and unchristian Resentments that have been expressed on my publishing the SERMON I delivered at the Ordination at *Stanford*? Is it not highly reasonable, and even necessary, nay, do not you your selves expect, and sometimes even demand it of us, that we should justify the Principles we act upon? And is any Time more proper and seasonable to insist upon and defend *Presbyterian Ordination*, than when it is to be practised? Would not you say we were self-condemned, if we did not sometimes insist upon this Subject on such Occasions? Suppose a Sermon preached at the Ordination of one of your Ministers, on the Necessity of *Episcopal Ordination*, would you not think it very unreasonable in any of us to disturb the Assembly by leaving it in Resentment, in the Time of divine Worship; and to fill the Country afterwards with Noise and Clamour against the Preacher? Would you

you not say, in such a Case, That we might reasonably have expected such a Sermon on such an Occasion; and therefore ought either not to have attended at all, or else to have staid and heard it out? And if such a Sermon was afterwards published, would you not say, that it became us rather fairly to answer the Argument offered in it, than to threaten, insult and defame the Author of it? Now this is exactly what I have to say in my Case. I had a just *Right* to offer my Sentiments in the Controversy between us and you, I chose a suitable *Occasion* to do it. And as I am fully perswaded, on long and impartial Consideration, that your separating from us is wrong in itself, and prejudicial to your selves, your Posterity, and your Country, in it's Consequences; especially as it tends to the Destruction of *practical Religion*, and the Introduction of Immorality and Prophaneness, I esteemed my self under strong Obligations to tell you this in the plainest and most publick Manner; and to endeavour to convince you of it, and impress a Sense thereof on your Consciences. And what is there in all this to raise or justify the Resentment that has been discovered in the Case? Why must Arguments against the Church of *England*, even tho' they are unanswerable, be stiled *Invectives* *, and *Rebuke for his Insolence*, be proposed as *the most proper Answer to be given the Author* †? Why must he be treated with so much Contempt, as to be stiled, *His humble Saintsship* †? But above all, Why must he be *boldly charged with gross Provocation and Falshood, done with a wicked Intent* ‖, when all that is pretended in justification of this *bold Charge*, amounts to no more than this, That he was led into a Mistake by transcribing from an Author whom he named, and whom he might take to be worthy of Credit? This, I say, is all that is *pretended* to support this *bold Charge*, and 'tis a great deal more than is true; as I shall shew hereafter. But in the

* Mr. *Wetmore's* Vindication, Title Page. † Page 25.

† Page 42. ‖ Page 22.

mean Time, is this the Way to convince me, if I were in an Error? Does your *Vindicator* think it the best Method to recommend himself or his Cause to the World? Or will he pretend to reconcile such Treatment to his own Declaration, That if any *Objections* are thought weighty and forceable against conforming [to the Church of England,] he and you should all be pleased to see them offered in their full Strength, that you may thereby be reclaimed from destructive Errors, if you have embraced them, or have Opportunity, by refuting such in THE SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS, to represent Truth in it's native Lustre.†? Such Reflections as I have mentioned, prove nothing, unless it be, that the Author of them is very angry and very impotent; and so long as there remains any Sense of good Nature and Politeness, Mankind will be apt to judge, that no Man who was able to defend his Cause in a fair, candid and generous Manner, would treat an Antagonist in such a Way as this; and therefore conclude, either that your Cause is bad, or that your Advocate is ill chosen. For my own Part, I can patiently bear such Abuses, knowing I have not deserved them, and expecting to convince you and the World that they are injurious, when I come to consider the Paragraphs which contain them. And in the mean Time, instead of *rendring Evil for Evil, and Railing for Railing*, I chuse to imitate him, who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. I proceed therefore to what more immediately concerns the Controversy between us.

Mr. *Wetmore* has given us your Opinion in this Controversy, in these Words, “ We assert the Communion of
 “ the Church of England, in all the Territories belonging to
 “ the Kingdom of England, to be safe and lawful, in Respect
 “ of the Laws of God and Man: We assert it to be not
 “ only expedient but necessary too, in order to discharge the
 “ Duty we owe to God, and the Peace and Order of So-

Episcopal Separation in New-England. 19

ciety, that every Man that has Opportunity, should actually embrace this Communion. Men not only consistently with their Duty may, but to discharge their Duty must be of the Communion of the Church of *England*, if they are Members of the Nation of *England*." Page 6. This Way of expressing the Point in dispute is *inaccurate*, and may be apt to lead you into a Mistake; I shall therefore state the Matter more exactly. And would observe, that strictly speaking, there is no such Thing as the "*the Kingdom of England*". The Island of *Great-Britain* was formerly divided into a great Number of petty Sovereignities, the *South Part* of it (commonly called *England*) was in the Days of our *Saxon* Ancestors, divided into *seven* distinct Kingdoms, and continued so for several Ages. And after all these were united and incorporated in one Monarchy by the Name of the *Kingdom of England*, the *northern Part* of the Island remained for many Ages a distinct Monarchy, under the Name of *the Kingdom of Scotland*. But about *forty* Years ago these two Kingdoms were united in one entire and grand Monarchy, to be forever after called and known by the Name of the *Kingdom of GREAT-BRITAIN*. So that it is now as really improper to speak of "*the Kingdom of England*" as it is to speak of the *Kingdom of Kent*; for as *Kent*, which was an independent Kingdom during the *Saxon Heptarchy*, upon it's being subdued by *EGBERT* King of *Wessex*, Anno 824, ceased to be a distinct Kingdom, and became a Part of that into which it was incorporated; So the *Kingdom of England* being incorporated with the *Kingdom of Scotland*, by the ACT OF UNION, Anno 1707, ceased to be a distinct Kingdom, and has ever since been considered as a Part of the *Kingdom of Great-Britain*. On this Occasion the *Royal Style* was changed from *King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland*, into *King of Great-Britain, France and Ireland*. And from this Time, when there is Occasion to distinguish between *England* and *Scotland*, the Phraseology in Acts of Parliament, Orders of Council, and the like, is not the *Kingdom of England* and the *Kingdom of Scotland*, but

that Part of the Kingdom of Great Britain called England, &c. Thus it is in the Order for observing the *Fifth of November*, which stands in your Common-Prayer Books immediately before the Office for that Day. 'Tis therefore at best an inaccurate Way of speaking, for Mr. *Wetmore* to tell us here of "*Territories belonging to the Kingdom of England*", and of being "*Members of the Nation of England*", and to mention Page 34, 35. "*The Colonies depending on the Crown of England, and to be esteemed as Part of the English Nation.*" For tho' such a Way of speaking may do well enough in ordinary Conversation, yet it must not be used in strict Disputing, especially when any of the Arguments turn upon this Point, as some of Mr. *Wetmore's* plainly do.

All within this Kingdom, which thus comprehends both *England* and *Scotland*, who profess Faith in CHRIST and Subjection to him, however they may differ in Things not essential to Christianity, are Members of the *British Church*, or Subjects of JESUS CHRIST within the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*. But there are two different ecclesiastical Constitutions which have obtained very full and ample legal Establishments in different Parts of this Kingdom. *Episcopacy* or the *Prelatic Constitution* is by Law established in the *South Part* of the Kingdom, and the *Presbyterian Constitution* is as fully and legally established in the *North Part* of it. *Presbyterian Constitution*, or the Church of *Scotland*, must be maintained as an essential Part of the civil Constitution of the Kingdom. The ACT OF UNION may be considered as the CHARTER of the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*. 'Tis what constitutes one entire Kingdom to be distinguished by that Name, as the *Charter* of the *Massachusetts* incorporates the two ancient Colonies of the *Massachusetts* and *Plymouth* into one entire and new Province. Now the *Act of Union* not only establishes the Church of *Scotland*, but declares it *unalterable*.

While *England* continued a distinct Kingdom, these *American Plantations* were justly considered as Colonies dependant

pendant on the Crown of *England*. And there are those yet living who remember when the Subjects of the Crown of *England* in *America*, were by Royal Proclamation forbid trading with the Subjects of the Crown of *Scotland*, who were then attempting a Settlement on the Isthmus of *Darien*. But since the Union these Colonies are *British Plantations*. They have an equal Relation to every Part of the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*, and an equal Freedom of Trade in the several Ports of it ; and *Glasgow Goods* are enter'd in the Custom-Houses in the Plantations by the Name of *British Manufactures* as *London Goods* are, and with the same Freedom from Customs and Duties.

The true State of the *British Nation*, and of the *American Colonies* dependent on it, being thus explained and set in it's just Light, I am now ready to consider these *Three Questions*, which comprehend the Controversy between you and us, viz.

I. Whether the Inhabitants of these dependent Colonies, those of *New-England* in particular, are OBLIGED in Point of DUTY, by the Laws of God or Man, to conform to the *Prelatic Church* established by Law in the *South Part* of the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*?

II. Whether it be EXPEDIENT, or proper in Point of PRUDENCE, for those who are already settled in such Churches as have so long subsisted in *New-England*, to forsake them and embrace *that Communion*? And,

III. Whether it be LAWFUL for particular Members of *New-English Churches* to separate from them, and join in Communion with the *Episcopal Assemblies* in the Country?

These three Questions comprise the Whole of the Controversy between Mr. *Wetmore* and me. They are, tho' under something different Expressions, and in the inverted Order, the very Heads under which he ranges and proposes

to consider the Objections against you contained in my *Sermon*. See his *Vindication*, p. 6. How well he has succeeded in answering my Objections, and justifying your Conduct, and his own, in separating from us, I am heartily willing you yourselves should judge, when you have heard my Reply. And I desire no other Favour of you in the Case, but that you will lay aside Passion and Prejudice, impartially consider the Merits of the Cause, judge as those that expect finally to be judged; and upon the whole, act as becomes those who value the Glory of God, the Honour of the REDEEMER, and the Advancement of *practical Religion*, above the Interest of any Party, or the Gratification of any Resentment whatever. I shall therefore go on to consider these Questions particularly and distinctly; and if I discourse something largely upon them, it will proceed from my being something desirous, not only to reply to all Mr. *Wetmore* has offered in your *Vindication*, but to obviate or answer such other Objections as you yourselves sometimes make to us. And as the Controversy, at least in this Form of it, is something new, I hope on this Account, the Length of my Book will be excused.

THE FIRST QUESTION is,

Whether the Inhabitants of the British Plantations in America, those of New-England in particular, are obliged in DUTY, by the Laws of God or Man, to conform to the Prelatic Church by Law established in the South Part of Great-Britain?

Mr. *Wetmore* has plainly enough told us which Side of this Question he holds; he asserts, that “Men not only MAY but MUST be of the Communion of the Church of England”. p. 6. And he “believes it the DUTY of all to become Proselytes to it.” p. 34. And “these (he says) must be supposed to be the Sentiments of all those, who endeavour to proselyte Men from every Sect to the Communion of the established Church”.

6. And he speaks of the same Persons and the same Things, as are mention'd in the Question, tho' he don't use exactly the same Terms. He calls these Plantations "*Territories belonging to the Kingdom of England*." p. 6. And "*Colonies depending on the Crown of England, and to be esteem'd Part of the English Nation*". p. 35. I chuse to speak more exactly, and therefore call them *British Plantations*. He calls the Communion you have embraced, the Church of *England*, and speaks of it as the *National Church*, and the established Communion, and that in such a Sense as excludes all other Forms of Church Government and Worship from being *national* or *established*. For he argues the Necessity of conforming to this Church, from it's being the *National Establishment*; and infers, *our* Obligations hereto, from *our* being Members of that Nation in which it is established. Which Arguments suppose, that it is the *only* Establishment in the Nation. But this is not Fact, with Regard to this Church at this Day, according to his own Notion of a Nation and a national Church. He says, p. 36. "When any Nation becomes Christian, i. e. by any authentic national Act establishes Christianity for the Religion of such a Nation, and receives such a Model of the Church of Christ, as was settled by the Apostles, that makes a national Church.---And such is the Nation of *England*: First, A civil Society, independent, having a Right to govern itself, and make Laws to regulate it's own most important Affairs, without being liable to the Controul of any Power upon Earth." 'Tis plain from these Words, that Mr. *Wetmore* considers a *Nation* and a *Kingdom* as the same Thing; for a Nation, in his Sense, is such a civil Society as has the entire Right of Legislation and Government within itself; that is, 'tis a distinct Kingdom. Now *England*, as distinguished from *Scotland*, is not a Kingdom, or a Nation, in Mr. *Wetmore's* Sense, for it is not a civil Society, having a Right to make Laws and govern itself: But is a Part of the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*, or of the *British Nation*. And if *England* be not an entire and distinct Kingdom or Nation,

Nation, it will follow that the Church of *England* cannot be the *National Establishment*, in such a Sense as to exclude all other Churches from being so. I acknowledge it to be a *National Church*, that is, a Church established by the supreme Authority of the *British Nation*, for a certain Part, tho' not for the Whole of that Nation. And this, as I have already shewn, is equally true of the Church of *Scotland*. And therefore, that I may represent Things as they *truly are*, and not lead you into any Misapprehensions concerning them, I choose, in stating the Question, to say, *The Church by Law established in the south Part of Great-Britain*. I go on to enquire what Obligations the Inhabitants of the *Colonies* are under, by Virtue of the Laws of God or Man, to submit or conform to this ecclesiastical Constitution. And,

1. 'Tis plain that we can't be *necessarily* obliged to this, merely from it's being *an Establishment* in that Nation of which we are a Part.

Mr. *Walmers* repeatedly uses this Argument, and insists on it as a Proof of the *Necessity* of our conforming to the Church of *England*: Thus he says, p. 6. "Men---to discharge their Duty MUST be of the Communion of the Church of *England*, if they are Members of the Nation of *England*". And again, p. 37. "It may surely be urged upon every Man that is *English*, that belongs to this Nation, and is properly a Part of it, in whatever Corner he may live, that his DUTY obliges him to be of the Communion of the Church of *England*". And he informs us that these are the *real Sentiments* of all the *Episcopal Missionaries*, p. 6. I confess he ought to be supposed best acquainted with the Sentiments of his Brethren, otherwise I should have tho't, that at least *some of them*, had known better than to act upon so weak a Principle, or use so fallacious an Argument as this. An ecclesiastical Establishment may be made for but a Part of a Nation; and it, at most, obliges those only for whom it is made. A Man may therefore be a Member of a certain Nation, which has an ecclesiastical Constitution

Constitution established by sovereign Authority, and yet be under no Obligation to conform to that Constitution; for he may not be of that *Part of the Nation* for which it was made, and to which only it is, in any Sense, obligatory. I can hardly think Mr. *Wetmore* himself will assert, that the People of *Scotland* are obliged to conform to the Church of *England*, on the Account of it's being a national Establishment, tho' it be undeniably true, that they are Subjects in the same Kingdom with the People of *England*, and Members of the same Nation, i. e. of the same civil Society, possessed of an independent Right of Legislation and Government, which is his own Description of a Nation, p. 36. Much less will he allow that the Inhabitants of that Part of the Kingdom called *England*, are obliged to conform to the Church of *Scotland*, tho' I have proved *that* to be a national Establishment equally with the Church of *England*.

The Case is truly this, There are *two* different ecclesiastical Establishments within the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*, they are, each of them, *National Churches*, that is, Churches *approved, ratified and confirmed* by the supreme Legislature of our Nation. If therefore the *one* of them may claim our Subjection, *merely* on the Account of it's being a *National Establishment*, the *other* has an *equal Claim* to it. And to be *equally obliged* to conform to both, is, in Reality, to be *not obliged* to conform to either; for contrary Obligations of equal Force necessarily destroy each other. This Argument therefore drawn from the Notion of a *national Establishment* can't possibly oblige the Inhabitants of the *British* Plantations to conform to the Church of *England*; for it is just as strong to oblige their Conformity to the Church of *Scotland*, which is likewise a *national Establishment* in that Kingdom of which we are dependent Colonies. Let us try whether Mr. *Wetmore's* Argument will not run as smooth, sound as well, and conclude as strong, changing the Terms according to this State of the Question thus, Men must be of the Communion of the Church of *Great-Britain*, if they are Members of the *British Nation*, and it may surely be urged upon every Man that

that is *British*, that belongs to this Nation, and is properly a Part of it, in whatever Corner he may live, that his Duty obliges him to be of the Communion of the Church of *Great-Britain*. If Mr. *Wetmore* allows that the Argument concludes in this Form, I demand what it proves; for it happens that there are two different *British National Churches*.

If this is not sufficient to cure Mr. *Wetmore* of his Fondness of this *National Argument*, I would ask him, Whether those in the Plantations that came from *Scotland*, or are descended from *Scottish* Ancestors are in Duty obliged to be of the Communion of the Church of *Scotland*. His Argument if there be any Force in it, would conclude this; for 'tis but changing the Terms, and it runs thus; Men must be of the Communion of the Church of *Scotland*, if they are Members of the *Scottish Nation*, &c. And if *England* may be considered as a distinct Nation notwithstanding the *Union*, so may *Scotland* too. And if this be granted, I hope Mr. *Wetmore* will be so good as to let us know, in his next, what Communion those are obliged to be of, who are by one of their Parents of *English*, and by the other of *Scottish* Descent.

By this Time, I believe, you are sensible that there is no Strength at all, in the Argument your Advocate thus uses, to vindicate your Conduct; and if he has nothing better to offer in your Defence, your Cause must be given up. And if there be no arguing our Obligations to conform to the Church of *England*, from it's being a national Establishment, he that would convince us that it is our Duty to conform to it, ought to be able to shew that the Laws which establish this Church extend to us, and plainly require our Conformity to it. In Opposition to which, I will venture to assert.

2. That the Laws which establish the episcopal Church in the South Part of *Great-Britain*, do not oblige the Inhabitants of the *British* Plantations in *America* to conform to it. I dont remember that any of your Writers have attempted to prove, or so much as plainly asserted that the Laws of *England* made

made for the Establishment and Support of the *Episcopal* Church there, do extend to, or are in Force in the Plantations. I believe they have been better advised. Their usual Practice is to take this for granted, and argue upon it as if it were not disputed. Thus Dr. *Johnson* files the People of *Stratford* that don't come to Church, his *dissenting Parishioners*, which supposes his Church to be established THERE, and yet he is so kind as to tell us, and he quotes the *Lords Justices of Great-Britain* for it, "That there is no regular Establishment of any national or provincial Church in these Plantations." || A Mr. *Wetmore* says many Things likewise, which suppose that these Laws extend to us. Thus he represents his Fellow-Missionaries as endeavouring "to proselite Men from every Sect to the Communion of the ESTABLISHED CHURCH". p. 6. He must be supposed to mean the Church established in those Places in which those Gentlemen endeavour to make Proselytes; for if he means no more than that this Church is established in some other Parts of the World, a *Jesuit* Missionary, in any one of the *British* Plantations, might use the pompous Expression with the same Propriety.

But though your Writers are cautious on this Head, yet some of you, my Brethren, who perhaps are not so well aware of the Consequences of it, are ready enough in Conversation, to declare that the Laws which establish the Church of England do extend hither. I have heard some of you declare, that you were under an higher Obligation to observe *Christmas*, than one of our Days of Thanksgiving; and give this Reason for it, That there was an Act of Parliament for the Observation of the one, and only an Act of the General Assembly of *Connecticut* for observing the other. And it is common with you to represent your selves as yielding Obedience to the KING and the Laws of the Nation, in conforming to the Church of England. To convince you of your Mistake in

this Matter, and shew you how much you are imposed on by those who argue on this Supposition, I would enquire,

1. Whether ALL THE LAWS of *England* made for the Establishment and Support of the Episcopal Church, do extend to the Plantations in *America*? Those of you who are in any Measure acquainted with the Laws of *England* in this Respect, will not, I am confident, be fond of answering this Question in the affirmative; for there are some Laws of this Kind, which, I believe, you would not care to be under. By the Law of *England* the Clergy are entitled to *Tithes*, and their Parishioners are obliged to pay them. These are by Law due to the *established Church*. Now if the Laws which establish this Church extend to the Plantations, you are obliged to pay your Minister, a tenth Part of all the Produce of your Lands, and of all the Increase of your Cattle of every Kind. And if the Laws you live under have made this his Due, you are guilty of *Injustice* in withholding it from him; and *Injustice* of the highest Kind; for it is, upon your own Principle, a *Robbing God*. But now since your Clergy don't claim nor you pay Tithes, I must conclude you don't think this Law extends to the Plantations. Well then, let us look upon it as a Point settled between us, that *all the Laws of England*, made for the Establishment and Support of the Church do *not* oblige us. Wherefore,

2. I demand a Reason for distinguishing in the Case, or saying, that *some* of these Laws *do*, when *others* of them confessedly *do not* extend to us. If the Laws of *England*, *as such*, extend to the Plantations, *all* of them must be allowed to do so. And if they do not *as such*, or meerly by Virtue of their being the Laws of *England*, oblige us; it will concern him, who pretends that any particular Law of *England* is obligatory *here*, to give some Reason for this, by shewing something that distinguishes that particular Law from the others. Thus, for Instance, If any Man tells me, that the *Act of Uniformity* extends to these Plantations, tho' the Law for pay-
ing

ing Tythes does not; I demand a Reason for this Difference between these two Laws; and if none can be given, I shall conclude, that I am as free from any Obligation to the one as the other of them.

It has sometimes been said that the *Common Law* of *England* extends to the Plantations, but the *Statutes* do not, unless the Plantations are named in them. But this Distinction, if it were to be allowed, would (I apprehend) rather hurt than help your Cause, in the Instance just now mentioned; for the Law for *Uniformity* is merely a *Statute*, whereas, I suppose, *Tithes* are due to the Clergy by *Common Law*, tho' many *Statutes* may have been made, for the more easy Recovery of them. I may perhaps be mistaken in this Point, for I don't pretend to any great Skill in the Law. And if the Obligation to pay *Tithes* arises originally from *Statute Law*, those two *Laws* are in this Respect equal, and neither of them obliges us in this Country, unless the *Acts* themselves expressly mention and are extended to the Plantations in *America*. Whether there be any Statute requiring the Payment of *Tythes* to the Clergy, which mentions these Plantations, I am not *Lawyer* enough to determine: But I am sure the *Acts* of *Uniformity* do not. There are two *Acts* of this Kind now in Force in *England*, except such Clauses in them as are contrary to the *Act* of *TOLERATION*. These are usually printed with the *Common-Prayer Book*: The former of them was enacted in the first Year of Queen *ELIZABETH*, *Anno Domini* 1559, the latter in the fourteenth Year of King *CHARLES II.* *A. D.* 1662. There is nothing in either of these *Statutes*, that so much as looks like a Design of extending the Establishment to these *American* Plantations, except those Words in the former of them, "Or other the *Queen's Dominions*." And these are far from being sufficient to to extend it hither. For,

(1.) This Statute, when it was in it's fullest and most extensive Force, was never design'd or understood to extend hither. This general Expression did not, either in it's own Nature, or in the Intention of the Legislators, extend to the

English Colonies in America; for there were, at the Time this Law was made, *no such Colonies*, nor so much as a Prospect of any; the first Attempts to settle any not having been made 'till twenty or thirty Years after. And the Practice upon this Law was such as plainly to shew that this *General Expression* was not look'd upon to be *universally obligatory*, even to all the Dominions that the Queen *actually possess'd* at the Time this Statute was enacted. There was another Statute made in the same Reign (13 Eliz. Chap. 12.) *For Reformation of Disorders in the Ministers of the Church*. The Design of it, as express'd in the Preamble, was, That the Churches of the *Queen's Majesty's Dominions* may be served with Ministers of sound Religion; and it required that all who had ecclesiastical Livings, should subscribe the *Doctrinal Articles* of the Church of England. But tho' this, and the Act of Uniformity (1 Eliz. Chap. 2.) mention *the Queen's Dominions*, neither *Ireland*, nor *Jersey*, nor *Guernsey* were thought to be included in these Statutes; tho' they were *Dominions belonging to the Queen*, and the two last annexed to the Crown of *England*. The Protestant Ministers in *Ireland*, in the Reign of *James I.* were chiefly *Scotts* and *Presbyterians*.
 “ Mr. Blair (who was one of them) was a zealous Presby-
 “ terian, and scrupled Episcopal Ordination, but the Bishop
 “ of the Diocese compromised the Difference, by agreeing
 “ that the other *Scotts* Presbyters of Mr. Blair's Persuasion,
 “ should join with him, and that such Passages in the esta-
 “ blish'd Form of Ordination, as Mr. Blair and his Brethren
 “ scrupled, should be omitted, or exchanged for others of
 “ their own Approbation. Thus was Mr. Blair ordained
 “ publickly in the Church of *Bangor*; the Bishop of *Raphoe*
 “ did the same for Mr. *Livingston*; and all the *Scotts* that
 “ were ordained in *Ireland* from this Time to the Year 1642
 “ were ordained after this Manner; all of them enjoy'd the
 “ Churches and Tithes tho' they remained *Presbyterian*, and
 “ used not the Liturgy *”. And so far were the Protec-

tant Clergy in *Ireland* from thinking themselves obliged (by the 13th of *Eliz.* Chap. 12.) to subscribe the Articles of the Church of *England*, that when a Motion was made in their Convocation (*Anno* 1615,) to adopt the *English* Articles, they refus'd to comply with it ; and instead of this drew up a large and excellent Confession of their own. And their Superiours were so far from censuring them for this, that they readily concurred with them herein ; for this Confession passed " both Houses of Convocation and Parliament " with great Unanimity, and being sent over to the *English* Court, was approved in Council, and ratified by the Lord Deputy *Chichester* †. And this remained the only public Confession of Faith of the Protestant Church in *Ireland*, 'till the Year 1634 ; when the Convocation was prevailed with to receive the *English* Articles by an Act of their own. The Churches of *Guernsey* and *Jersey* enjoy'd the Discipline of the *French* Protestant Churches (which was *Presbyterian*) without Disturbance, during the whole of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign ; and had the use of it solemnly confirmed to them by King *James*, in the first Year of his Reign ‡. Thus there were *Presbyterian* Churches within the *Queen's Dominions* ; and Ministers who did not subscribe the Articles of the Church of *England*, nor use her Liturgy, officiated in public Churches and received Tithes ; and these Things were known and approved of by the supreme Authority of the Nation, while both these Statutes (that of the *First* and that of the *Thirteenth* of *Queen Elizabeth*) were in full Force, tho' both of them mention, the *Queen's Dominions*. And we never find the King's allowing and countenancing these Things, or his granting Charters to particular Colonies in *America*, with the fullest Allowance of Liberty of Conscience, condemned as *illegal* and *arbitrary* Actions, as the Attempting to dispense with penal Laws in ecclesiastical Affairs within the Kingdom of *England*, has always been judged. If

† *Neal's Hist.* p. 106. ‡ *Ibid.* 74.

therefore we consider the Expression itself (*other the Queen's Dominions*) it does not necessarily relate to the *American Colonies*, for it was used, and properly used, before there were any such ; or, if we regard the Intention of those who made the Law, it could not extend to these Colonies, which then had no Existence ; or if we have Respect to the Practice upon the Law, it was not tho't to extend to every Part of the *Dominions the Queen actually possessed* at the Time this Law was made, and much less to those that were not inhabited by *Englishmen* 'till many Years after. But,

(2.) If those Words in this Statute are understood as including the Plantations in *America*, they are repealed by the last Act of Uniformity, in the 14th Year of *Charles II.* The *Liturgy* and *Ordinal* which were established by *Queen Elizabeth's* Statutes, were revived, and had Additions and Alterations made in them by the first Convocation that sat in the Reign of *Charles II.* and these were such as rendred them, in the Sense of the Law, *other Books* ; so different from the former, that there was need of a *new* Statute to establish and enforce the Use of them. Upon which the last Act of Uniformity was made, which provides, That the Book of Common-Prayer, and the Book of Ordination, established in *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign, shall be used and observed until the Feast of *St. Bartholomew*, 1662 ; and enacts, That a Book of Common-Prayer and Ordination, agreed upon by the Convocation then sitting, and annexed to this Act, should be established and used from that Time forward. 'Tis evident therefore, that *Queen Elizabeth's Liturgy* and *Ordinal* are repealed ; and that no Man has been obliged to use them since *St. Bartholomew's Day*, 1662. Now the Repeal of the *Queen's Book of Common-Prayer*, was really and properly a Repeal of her *Uniformity-Act*, which had no other View or Design but to establish *that* Liturgy, nor a single Clause that related, to any thing else. So that *Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity* would have been absolutely repealed, to all Intents and Purposes, by *King Charles's Act of Uniformity*,
were

were it not for a *saving Clause* in this last Act, which says, that the several good Laws before made, and at that Time in Force for Uniformity, shall be applied, practised and put in Use, with Relation to *the Book now established*, and no other. All the Force therefore which the first Act of Uniformity *now* has, is entirely owing to the saving Clause in the latter Act; and consequently Queen Elizabeth's Act, tho' it has those Words in it (*other the Queen's Dominions*) can't be more extensive than King Charles's, to which it owes all the Life it has. Now nothing can be more certain than that King Charles's Statute is limited to the Kingdom of *England*, the Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*; which are likewise the very Limitations used in the Statute (7th of *William III.* Chap. 6.) for the more easy Recovery of *small Tithes*. The Obligations, in Point of Law, to conform to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, and to pay Tithes to her Clergy, are therefore of equal Extent, and, thro' the Favour of God, neither of them reach to us on this Side the *Atlantic*. And agreeable to this (I'm inform'd) has been the Resolution of several Cases in Law, both in the Plantations and at Home. To all which I may add, the *Lords Justice Letter to the Lieutenant Governour of Boston*, in the 1725, which declares, *That there is no regular Establishment of any National or Provincial Church in these Plantations*. This I quote on the Authority of Dr. *Johnson*, and if there should be any Mistake in it, I hope Mr. *Wetmore* will not tell me again, *That it will not excuse me to say, I write after another as wicked and false as myself*. So that if I should allow, what I can by no Means grant, that the civil Magistrate has a Right to say what Religion the Subject shall believe and profess, or Authority to establish a particular Form of Divine Worship and ecclesiastical Discipline, and oblige all his Subjects to conform and submit to it, yet this Conclusion would do you no Good; since there is no Establishment of the Church of *England* that affects us in this Country. And I have argued in this Form, because, as it is most agreeable to your Principles, I tho't it the most likely to convince you.

Having

Having thus (I hope sufficiently) prov'd that the Laws of Man do not oblige us to conform to the Church of *England*, it remains to enquire, Whether the Laws of God do so ? I go on therefore to say,

III. There is no *Divine Law* that requires our Conformity to the Church of *England*. Mr. *Wetmore* says on this Head, “ If it be every Man’s indispensable Duty to be a Christian, the same Duty will oblige him to be and continue a Member of the Church of Christ, which is his Body, to preserve and maintain the Peace, Order and Unity of the Body, and especially of that Part to which he particularly belongs ; which will infer the Duty of reverencing and submitting to the Officers regularly presiding and governing in such Church ; which being the Bishops of the Church of *England* in chief ; every one that makes a Part of this Nation owe Reverence and Submission to them, under Christ, and may esteem our Saviour’s Words to his Apostles, applicable to such Prelates ; *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.*” p. 37, 38. I can easily allow that the same Duty which obliges a Man to be a Christian, obliges him to be a Member of the Church of Christ, because a *Christian* and a *Member of the Church of Christ*, are precisely the same Thing. But that a Man is under as strong Obligation to be a Member of the Church of *England*, or of any other particular Church whatever, as to be a Christian, is what must not be allowed. To be a *Christian* is indispensibly necessary to eternal Salvation, at least to all who have Opportunity and Ability to judge of the Evidences of the Gospel ; for of all such ’tis undoubtedly true, That *He that believeth not shall be damned*. But this cannot be said of every one, that is not a Member of the Church of *England*, or any one particular Church in the World. ’Tis very possible that any Church may wrongfully exclude a Person from her Communion, or excommunicate him, *Clave errante*. The Church of *Rome*, tho’ she claims *Infallibility* in her doctrinal Decisions, yet acknowledges she may be mistaken in judging Matters of

of *Fact*, because in these the Church depends on human Testimony, which may be false, and she has no Way to discover the Falsity. And sure no Man, in his Senses, will say, that an unjust Excommunication cuts a Person off from Christ, and necessarily infers eternal Condemnation.

It is a strange Tho't of Mr. *Wetmore's*, that the Law of God requires us to submit to the Bishops of the Church of *England*, because we make a Part of the *English Nation*, as he will call it. By this Rule an *Englishman* must be an *Episcopalian*, a *Scotchman*, a *Presbyterian*, a *Dutchman*, a *Calvinist*, a *Sweede*, a *Lutheran*, a *Frenchman*, a *Papist*, and all this by Virtue of the Law of God. Whereas the divine Law, under the Gospel Dispensation, does not at all consider these petty Distinctions between Nations, for in Christ there is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, *Barbarian* nor *Scythian*. Mr. *Wetmore* quotes that Text, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give Account; and observes upon it, "The Greek Word here rendred, them that have the Rule over you, signifies Governors, such as Prelates are in the Church."* If Mr. *Wetmore* means that the Word *always* means Governors, he is mistaken, as he must own, if he will but turn to Acts 14. 12. "And they called *Barnabas*, *Jupiter*; and *Paul*, *Mercurius*; because he was the chief *Speaker*": In the Original, *Egoumenos Logou*. Here the Word *Egoumenos*, which Mr. *Wetmore* says, signifies Governor, is used of the Person who was thought to be inferior; for *Mercury* is in the *Grecian Mythology* much beneath *Jupiter*. Or if Mr. *Wetmore* thinks that whenever it is used for a Ruler or Governor, it means an ecclesiastical one, he is again mistaken; for the same Word is used of *Joseph* in *Egypt*, Acts 7. 10. And yet *Joseph* was no Bishop. But if we allow all he says upon this Text, it will not serve his Turn; for if the Bishop of *London* may claim my Obedience, by Virtue of this Text, so may the Bishop of *Winchester*. The divine Law has no where determined which of these is our *Diocesan*; and therefore, if this is ever done, it must be by human

man Laws; and the Laws of the Nation not having established the prelatic Church in the Plantations, do not oblige me to submit to either of them.

It follows p. 38. "*There are many Texts in the New-Testament, forbidding Divisions, requiring the Preservation of Unity, Peace, and Order.*" I heartily wish he and you had shewn more Regard to them, and not broken the Unity, and disturbed the Peace and Order of our Churches, by your *unnecessary* and *sinful Separation* from them. And when he adds, Texts requiring, "*Submission to Government,*" this will not at all excuse you; for neither God nor Man required this of you. One of those Texts requiring Submission to Government, which I suppose Mr. *Wetmore* had his Eye upon, which is commonly, tho' very improperly used in this Controversy, and which (I know) many of you depend much upon, tho' it really makes nothing for your Cause, is, 1 Pet. 2. 13. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake.* This Epistle was probably written about the sixth Year of NERO the Roman Emperor. The Laws of the Empire at this Time in Force, established *Paganism* as the national Religion, and it was but four Years after that this Emperor order'd the Christians to be persecuted, for not conforming to the National Religion established by the Laws of the Empire. And in this Persecution, according to the best Accounts we have, St. *Peter* himself suffered *Martyrdom*. Now I appeal to your own Reason and Consciences, my Brethren, Whether in these Circumstances, the Apostle, by *every Ordinance of Man*, ought not to be understood, as meaning only such Laws as were of a mere *civil* Nature. Can you possibly believe, that he directed Christians to submit to the imperial Laws of a *religious* Nature, which were all *Heathenish*, and which he himself chose rather to die than conform to? And I submit to the Learned, whether *Ktisis anthropine*, the Expression used in the Original, don't rather signify a Law relating to human *Affairs*, than one respecting *divine Worship*. Where any Man therefore uses this and such like Texts to enforce Conformity to the Church of
England,

England, in this Country, you ought to suppose, either that he is in himself ignorant in the Affair, or that he designs to impose upon you: Especially since, as we have already proved, there is no Law of Man that requires this Conformity of you.

If Mr. *Wetmore* therefore would have us believe the Law of God requires our Conformity to the Church of *England*, he must produce some other Texts of Scripture; very different from those he has hitherto referred us to. But if this is not to be directly proved from any express Text in the *Bible*, perhaps it may be consequentially inferred by Arguments well formed on Scripture. Mr. *Wetmore* has attempted something of this Nature, in what he says concerning the *Schism* he charges on our Forefathers. I therefore proceed to say,

IV. The Inhabitants of *New-England* are not obliged to conform to the Church of *England*, on Account of any *Schism* made by their Forefathers in leaving that Communion. Mr. *Wetmore* uses this as one of his best Arguments, and writes with an *Air of Triumph* whenever he is upon this Subject. Thus, p. 29. He represents our “*Congregations*” (for he will not call them Churches) as “founded in *Schism*, and “unjustifiable-Separation from the Communion of the “Church of *England*; or such as use their present Constitution must necessarily be esteemed Abettors and Approvers of “*Schism*, Disorders, Usurpation, Contempt of the chief Authority Christ has left in his Church, and such like Crimes”. And he says, p. 40. “The awful Guilt of *Schism* ---- was “contracted by those who began the Separation in *England*, “renounced the Authority of their Governors, and invited “discontented People to join their Disobedience; to despise their lawful and faithful Guides, and set up Parties “against them, in Defiance of the Laws of Church and State, “and after the Guilt contracted by such Disobedience and “schismatical Separations, what Influence could crossing the “Waters have to purge such Crimes? or justify the same “disobedient Tempers, and unlawful Practices, in a new “Country,

“Country, dependent on, and Part of the Nation of England?” Thus he would represent our Forefathers, the first Settlers of *New-England*, as Men who deserve to be remembered by Posterity with *Contempt and Infamy*, for having renounced the Authority of their Governors, despised their lawful and faithful Guides, defied the Laws both of Church and State, set up a schismatical Separation in their native Country, and then crossed the Ocean to perpetuate their Schism. The first Ministers of *New-England* have a still blacker Character given of them, they are stiled *PERFIDIOUS Presbyters of the Church*, p. 22. and *RENEGADO Presbyters, who threw off their Subjection to their Bishops, and invaded the sacred Office, contrary to their Ordination Vow and Promise*, p. 19. This is the odious Character he gives of the first Settlers of this Country, and we know who they are in particular to whom he supposes this Character belongs; for in the *Postscript* Mr. *Wetmore* tells us who he means by “*the Forefathers and Founders of New-England*”, even those that came from *England*, Anno 1630. He names *John Winthrop* Governor, *Richard Saltonstall*, *Isaac Johnson*, *Thomas Dudley* and *William Coddington*. He means the Governor and Company of the *Massachusetts Colony*, of which these Gentlemen really were the Leaders. These were truly, as he stiles them, *our Forefathers, and the Founders of New-England*, and by some of them the Colony of *Connecticut* was settled.

It is surprizing to me, that Mr. *Wetmore* should thus load with *Infamy* the Memory of those from whom, I suppose, he himself is descended, those whom he stiles “*our Forefathers*.” If *Truth* had been on his Side, *filial Piety* should have check’d his Pen. Had his *Forefathers* deserved this Character, yet it was not decent for him to give it. Why must he use so foul-mouth’d a Term as that of *Renegado*? A Term of Infamy peculiar to those most abandon’d Wretches, who renounce the Christian Religion and turn *Mahomitans*; and of whom it is commonly remarked, that they discover vastly greater *Rancour* and *Malice* against Christianity than the native *Turks* do. Would Mr. *Wetmore* think himself handsomely treated, if I should

should stile him a *Renegado Presbyter*, on the Account of his renouncing his Presbyterian Ordination, and taking episcopal Orders? And yet I could give Instances of his discovering a Temper very much like that of the *Renegado's* in his Conduct toward those whose Communion he has forsaken. I dare even leave it to his own Conscience, whether he did not appear very much in the *Renegado Character*, when he declared before many Witnesses (some of which will appear when he calls for them) that he had rather join in Worship with a *Jewish Synagogue* than with a *Presbyterian Church*.

If Mr. *Wetmore* is capable of taking Satisfaction in treating the Founders of *New-England* in this Manner, yet I hope you, my Brethren, can't join with him in it. Can you take Pleasure in reading such Reflections on those from whom you derive your Being, and the Fruit of whose Labours and Sufferings you now enjoy, in the Plenty and Liberty with which this Country is blest'd? — Mr. *Wetmore* wou'd represent me (in his *Postscript*) as one of the “*degenerate Children of our good Forefathers*”; and yet I have that Regard for their Memories, that his Treatment of them raises my Resentment, more than all the *personal* Abuses he has offered me.

But is this *infamous Character* he gives of the Fathers of this Country, true, or supported by proper Evidence, or does he himself believe it? Mr. *Wetmore* (if my Memory don't deceive me) in a Piece published some Years ago, mentions the *honest old Puritans* as Enemies to the *Separatists*. And I have some Reason to suppose that he believes the Founders of *New-England* were generally sincere good Men, and are now with God. And for my own Part, I make no Doubt that when *Christ shall appear*, they also shall appear with him in Glory, and that their Crowns of Glory will be the more bright and shining, on the Account of their Sufferings for Christ in their Lives, and the *Reproach* with which Mr. *Wetmore* has loaded their Memories, so long after their Death.

Instead of producing any Proof to support this heavy Charge brought against the Memory of our excellent Forefathers,

fathers, Mr. *Wetmore* himself, at last, speaks honourably of them; tho' it be at the Expence of the grossest Self-Contradiction. In his *Letter* he never mentions them without endeavouring to *stigmatize* their Memories: But when he came to write his *Postscript*, it seems his Heart misgave him, for the Abuses he had offered to such excellent Persons: And now he speaks of them in a very different Manner. “*Our Forefathers*”; “*Our good Forefathers*”; “*the good Fathers and Founders of New England*”, are the Terms in which the *Postscript* mentions the Persons whom the *Letter* itself stiles *Renegado and perfidious Presbyters*. The *Letter* represents the Founders of our Churches, as having “*begun the Separation in England, renounced the Authority of their Governors,---despised their lawful and faithful Guides, and set up Parties against them, in Defiance of the Laws of Church and State, and after the Guilt contracted by such Disobedience and schismatical Separations---crossing the Waters, &c.*” But the *Postscript* paints them in quite different Colours, as some of the most dutiful Sons of the Church, acknowledging “*with the utmost Gratitude, that all the Good that was in them, they derived from the Church of England, whom they call their dear Mather.*” Nay, Mr. *Wetmore* has now so high an Opinion of our Forefathers, that he wishes and prays that all their Posterity may forever be like them. Thus he concludes his *Postscript*, “*Would to God Mr. Hobart, and all their Children, had the same blessed Temper which they had, and would still and forever speak as they did.*” This concluding *Prayer* really surprizes me. Does Mr. *Wetmore* sincerely wish that all the Children of *New-England* may always have the same Temper with their Forefathers, and can he call it a *blessed Temper*, when (if his Word may be taken) it was such an one as influenced them to “*renounce the Authority of their Governors*”, to “*despise their lawful and faithful Guides, &c.*”

When I first read Mr. *Wetmore's Vindication*, these Contradictions appeared in so strong a Light, that I could not believe the *Letter* and *Postscript* were wrote by the same Hand.

I was therefore ready to surmise, that some Person who met with the Manuscript, after it went from the Author, might have tacked the *Postscript* to it. But was at a Loss whether some *weak Friend* of the Author's, who could not perceive that he was contradicting him; or some *sly Adversary* that design'd to expose him by so ungenerous an Artifice. I have since been credibly inform'd that Mr. *Wetmore* has disown'd the *Postscript*; and therefore should have been doubtful of quoting it as his, had he not been so kind as to send me one of his Books corrected with his own Pen: But as this has the *Postscript* annexed to it, I have sufficient Authority for considering and treating it as *his*. But to return.

The Question we are now upon, is, Whether our Forefathers contracted "the awful Guilt of Schism" by leaving the Church of *England*? And consequently, Whether the Churches of *New-England* are, in their present Constitution, Schismatical? This is plainly Mr. *Wetmore's* Opinion, or at least he would have you think so. And if it be really the Case, I readily allow, that you are justifiable in forsaking our Communion, and returning to the Church of *England*. But what Evidence does he produce to support this Charge? 'Tis a Rule founded in Reason, That the Evidence ought to be proportion'd to the Nature of the Crime charged: It will therefore require plain and full Evidence to convict us of so heinous a Crime as Mr. *Wetmore* allows Schism to be. But instead of this, does he so much as "*seem*" to prove this? He first introduces this Matter with an *If*, p. 29. "*If the Congregations, forsaking which is called Schism, are themselves founded in Schism, and unjustifiable Separation from the Church of England*". I wish he had here done what he blames me for omitting, that is, had put his Argument in *Mode and Figure*. Had he assumed here, *But this is the Case, &c.* there would have been the Appearance of arguing. But this, he was sensible, would have proved "a very hard Task", and therefore evaded it. However, I will venture to tell him, in his own Words, "He must go thro' it before his Charge will lie against" us. And 'till he does this, he can't

can't be thought to vindicate your Conduct in separating from us.

The next Passage in which this Matter is mentioned, is in p. 40. "*The awful Guilt of Schism --- was contracted by those who began the Separation in England, &c.*" Here, if I understand him, he would represent the Matter, that the Founders of our Churches set up *schismatical Separations in England*, and afterward crossed the *Atlantic* to establish and perpetuate their Schism. This I utterly deny, and he has not offered the least Shadow of Proof of it, unless his Word must be taken for Proof; which he must not expect, since he has not only contradicted it, but even given us some Evidence that the Fact was really otherwise. In his *Postscript*, he represents these Persons as dutiful Sons of the Church of England, and as a Proof of it, gives us an Extract of a *Letter to the Bishops and Clergy and People of the Church of England*, written, or at least signed, on board the Ship *Arrabella*, which brought them to *New-England*. This *Letter*, the whole of which, Mr. *Wetmore* says, deserves to be written in Letters of Gold, was, as Mr. *Prince* informs us, "said to be drawn up by that learned, holy, reverend and famous Mr. *White* of *Dorchester* * " one of Mr. *Wetmore's* *perfidious renegade Presbyters*, and signed by another of them, the Rev. Mr. *George Phillips* *, tho' Mr. *Wetmore* has not given us his Name among the Signers of it. This *Letter* is a direct Proof that the first Planters of this Country, both Ministers and People, were so far from having set up schismatical Separations in England, which Mr. *Wetmore* injuriously charges them with, that they continued Members of the Church of England, 'till they left the Nation. This is an Evidence of Mr. *Wetmore's* own producing, which therefore you ought to give full Credit to. But now what becomes of the Question he asks with such an Air, p. 40. "*What Influence could crossing the Waters have to purge those Crimes, or justify the same*"

“ *disobedient Tempers, and unlawful Practices, in a new Country, dependent on, and a Part of the Nation of England?* ” Surely Mr. *Wetmore* don’t think it a *Crime* to be a Member of the Church of *England*; an Argument of a *disobedient Temper* to call her dear *Mother*; nor an *unlawful Practice* to ask her *Prayers*: And yet this is all that the Witness he himself produces, charges these Persons with.

It is well known to all who are acquainted with the ecclesiastical History of *England*, that the *old Puritans*, tho’ they greatly disliked many Things in the Church of *England*, and endeavoured, by all lawful Means, to procure a further and more perfect Reformation (which Mr. *Wetmore* elegantly calls “ *opening their refining Shops in the Kingdom* ”) were yet Enemies to Separation. They had a great Dread of contracting the awful Guilt of Schism. No Men in the Nation preach’d or wrote more warmly against the *Separatists* than the *Puritans* did. Of this I could produce a Cloud of Witnesses, were it needful. Mr. *White*, a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, who is now managing a Controversy with the Dissenters at Home, says on this Head, “ It seems “ to be growing mighty modish with their People [the Dissenters in *England*] to laugh at all Notions of Church “ Communion, and make nothing of the most unnecessary “ Separations. But from the Beginning it was not so.” And after mentioning St. *Paul*, *Ignatius*, &c. as testifying against Separations, he adds, “ So did the old *Puritans*,--- “ and indeed no body did it more, if so much as they” †. This Witness is true,

There were two Sorts of Men who conscientiously scrupled, and therefore refused to approve of, or use some of the Ceremonies of the Church of *England*. These were all, on this Account, sometimes call’d by the general Name of NONCONFORMISTS: But they did not all go the same Lengths. Some of them openly and wholly separated from the established Church; and

† *White’s Defence of his three Letters*, p. 25.

were from thence called SEPARATISTS. The rest continued in the Church, and used as much of the public Liturgy as they could with a good Conscience, omitting such Parts as they dare not use. These were then called PURITANS, for their professing a Desire of a greater Purity in the Worship and Ordinances of God. This Sort of Men were sometimes for a while connived at, and at other Times severely punished, according as the governing Bishops happened to be mild or severe in their Temper or Principles. Archbishop *Abbot* was very friendly to them. His Successor Archbishop *Laud* was their great Enemy, and cruel Persecutor. *Abbot* had for some Time been declining, and *Laud* advancing in the King's Favour, 'till the Year 1627, when the former was arbitrarily suspended, and ordered to retire, and his Jurisdiction put into the Hands of five Bishops, by Commission, of which *Laud* was chief †. From this Time the Puritans had no Favour shewn them, they must conform to every Punctilio of Ceremony, or be suspended, deprived, fined, imprisoned and harrassed to Death. And these Things grew so fast upon them, that in a few Years they transported themselves and Families into this Country ‡. Thus we have brought our Forefathers safe to *New-England*, and that, free from the Guilt of Schism; for as yet they had not separated from, but were Ministers and Members of, the Church of *England*. I conclude the Account of the Conduct of these Men, antecedent to their forming themselves into a Church State in this Land, by wishing (in my turn) that Mr. *Wetmore* and his Brethren the episcopal Ministers, with all others who have run into either the *Episcopal* or the *New-Light* Separation in this Country, had discovered the same blessed Temper, and acted upon the same peaceable Principles as these their excellent Forefathers did. This would have prevented the rash, uncharitable and schismatical Separations they have run

† *Naa's History of the Puritans*, Vol. II. p. 175, 176.

‡ *Prince's New-Eng. Chron.* p. 238, 239.

into, to the Dishonour and Danger of Religion. For then, if they had tho't any thing greatly amiss in our Constitution, they would have endeavoured to have had it amended, before they had renounced Communion with us. And if these Endeavours had proved unsuccessful, and they had thought it necessary to erect Churches of another Form, they would at least have retired into some other Part of the World, where they might have enjoyed what they so highly valued, without disturbing others, setting up Altar against Altar, and contracting, what Mr. Wetmore agrees with me in styling, the awful Guilt of Schism.

Some of you, *my Brethren*, may perhaps think, that though our Forefathers brought no Guilt of Schism into the Country with them, they might contract some after their Arrival, by erecting Churches upon a Model so different from that of the Church of *England*. To this I reply, That a *national Church* is in the Nature of it a *local Thing*. It necessarily has it's Bounds and Limits, beyond which it does not extend; and these are determined by the Laws which establish it, or make it a *national Church*. Now I have already proved that the Laws which establish the Church of *England* do not extend to the *American Plantations*. Our Forefathers, therefore, when they arrived in this Country, were entirely without the Pale of the national Church of *England*, and absolutely at Liberty to form themselves into such Churches, as they, according to the best Light they could obtain, judged most agreeable to the *Gospel Model*. Their doing so did, in no Degree, infringe the Rights or disturb the Peace of any Church under Heaven: And therefore no other Church had any Right to controul them, or Reason to complain of them. So far as they were perswaded in their Consciences, that the Church of *England* was, in it's Constitution and Practices, agreeable to the Gospel, they were to imitate it. And this is just as true of the Church of *Scotland*, or any other Church on Earth. But consider it merely as a *national Church*, or *legal Establishment*, they were under no sort of Obligation to it. *Human Laws* did not oblige them in the Case, be-

cause they did not extend to this Country : And the *Divine Law* did not oblige them in this Case, because (besides what has been said before) the Gospel knows no such Thing as a *National Church*. There is therefore no more Schism in the Churches of *New-England*, on the Account of their being formed upon a Plan different from the Church of *England*, than there is in the *English Church* on Account of it's not conforming itself to the Church of *Geneva*, or to the Protestant Churches of *Germany*, which were reformed before it. In one Thing we certainly have the Advantage of you, for the Reformers of the Church of *England*, tho' they looked on the Scripture as the proper Rule of Faith, did not think them the *only* Rule in Matters of Government and Worship. They never so much as *pretended* to conform the *Polity and Ceremonies* of the Church to the Scripture Standard ; But admitted and retained Things, which they *knew* and *owned* were never heard of, 'till some considerable Time after the Canon of Scripture was finished. Whereas the Founders of our Churches always professed to make the sacred Scriptures the *only* Rule in Matters of Discipline and Worship, as well as in Articles of Faith. And tho' you may think they mistook the Sense of Scripture, in some Instances, and we don't pretend they were infallible ; yet I believe you think they acted honestly. Now, if while they sincerely endeavoured to conform the Church State, in every Part of it, to the Rules of God's Word, they were in some Things mistaken, yet on the Whole, instead of contracting the formal Guilt of Schism, they were no doubt approved and accepted of that God, who judges Men by the Sincerity of their Hearts, and not by the Perfection of their Knowledge.

Thus, I hope those worthy and excellent Men, the Fathers of this Country, are fully cleared from the Crimes Mr. *Wetmore* has accused them of. I have been the larger in vindicating their Reputation, because I hope a Veneration for them may be a Means of inducing the present Generation, not only to esteem and hold fast those ecclesiastical Privileges they purchased for us at so dear a Rate ; but also of exciting their

their Posterity to imitate that *serious Religion* and *practical Godliness*, for which they were so remarkable.

And if any of you, *my Brethren*, have forsaken the Communion of the Churches in which you were educated, on the Supposition that you ought to do so, because your Fathers were guilty of Schism in erecting them, you were really mistaken, and ought, on your Conviction of this, to return to us.

But if Mr. *Wetmore* can't prove the Churches of New-England guilty of *formal Schism*, perhaps he thinks he can prove them *Favourers of Schism*. He seems to imagine this will infer the Necessity of forsaking them; and if he can but destroy them, he is not very much concerned about the Means of doing it. Hear how admirably he talks upon this Head, p. 29, 30. "If the Congregations, forsaking which is called Schism, are themselves founded in Schism,---or in their present Constitution must necessarily be esteemed Abettors and Approvers of Schism, Disorders, Usurpation, Contempt of the chief Authority Christ has left in his Church, or any such like Crimes: Then such Congregations ---ought to be esteemed, in Respect of the mystical Body of Christ, only as Excrescencies or Tumors in the Body natural, or perhaps as Fungosities in an ulcerated Tumor, the eating away of which, by whatever Means, tends not to the Hurt, but to the Soundness and Health of the Body". I can't forbear remarking here, that Mr. *Wetmore* carries the Matter farther than I expected, even from him. I took him indeed for one of those *Surgeons* that would prescribe *Corrosives*, as the only Means of healing the Wounds of the Church; but I supposed he would have been contented with such Penal Laws as our Fathers suffered under, in the Days of Archbishop *Laud*. But to propose the eating away such *Fungosities* as he esteems us, by WHATEVER MEANS, as making for the Health of the Body, is going a great Way indeed. Does he mean to justify such *Military Executions* as were used against the Presbyterians in Scotland in the Reign of King CHARLES II. or the Dragooning the Protestants in France, in the Time of

LEWIS

LEWIS XIV? 'Tis said to have been a favourite Maxim with *Frances Xavier*, the famous Jesuit, who was stiled the Apostle of the Indies, That *Missionaries* without *Muskets* do never make Converts to any Purpose *. If Mr. *Wetmore* means the same Thing, by eating away *Fungosities* by whatever Means, he is excellently qualified for a Mission from the Society de *propagande Fide*.

Mr. *Wetmore* has another Passage relating to this Subject, which serves to explain what I last quoted from him. "If the Separation be kept on Foot unjustifiably in Old-England, these in New-England draw their Guilt upon themselves; not only by acting upon their Principles; but justifying their Contempt and Disobedience, by denying and disputing against all Episcopal Power superiour to that of Presbyters, and refusing the Communion of those that submit to such a Power most regularly established" †. He had before charged to our Account, what he supposed criminal in our Forefathers, long before we were born, and now he would make us answerable for the Faults of our Brethren, the *English Dissenters*, tho' committed at the Distance of a *Thousand Leagues* from us, and by Persons we never saw. Now tho' this may seem something hard, yet there is this agreeable Circumstance attending it, it looks as if the Man was at a Loss for personal Faults to charge us with, when he takes so much Pains to fix the Guilt of all he thinks criminal in any of our Relations, on us. Let us see, however, whether he has any better Success in his Endeavours to prove us *Favourers of Schism*, than he before had, in labouring to fix *Schism* on us. Here I would observe,

I. If the *English Dissenters* are guilty of *Schism*, so are the *Scottish Dissenters* likewise. He thinks the *Dissenters* in *England* guilty of this Crime, because they forsake a true

* *Miller's Hist. Propag. Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 364.

† P. 40, 41.

Church which has a legal Establishment, and so is a *national Church*, and they live within the Bounds of it. But now this is exactly the Case with the *Episcopalians* in *Scotland*. They dissent and separate from a true Church, which has a most ample legal Establishment, and within the Bounds of which they dwell. If therefore the Churches of *New-England* must be condemned as Favourers of Schism, on Account of their favouring the Dissenters in *England*, the Church of *England* must fall under the very same Condemnation for favouring the Dissenters in *Scotland*; for Mr. *Wetmore*, if he knows anything of the Matter, will not deny, that the *Scottish* Dissenters † have received, at least, as much Countenance, and as many Favours from the Church of *England*, as ever the *English* Dissenters did from us. And consequently this can in no Measure justify you in separating from us, and joining with the Church of *England*. Again,

2. If we must be accountable for all the Faults of the Dissenters in *England*, because there are some Things common to them and us; the Church of *England* may, by the same Rule, be charged with all the Faults of the Church of *Rome*. Mr. *Wetmore*, I hope, will join with me in saying, that the *Romish* Church is schismatical, heretical, idolatrous, and even antichristian; yet he would think it hard to have the Church of *England* charged with favouring her in the Things which render her so. But if his Way of arguing, in the Passages now under Consideration, be allowed, I don't see how this can be avoided. He says we draw the Guilt of those in the Separation in *England* upon ourselves, "by acting
" upon their Principles, justifying their Contempt and Disobedience, by denying and disputing all episcopal Power superiour to
" that of Presbyters, and refusing the Communion of those that

† These *Scottish* Dissenters were almost universally in the late Rebellion, while the *English* Dissenters were some of the most zealous Opposers of it.

“submit to such a Power most regularly established”. In the same Manner, I may as justly say, The Church of *England* draws the Guilt of the Church of *Rome* upon itself, by acting upon it's Principles, justifying it by denying and disputing the Presbyters Right of Ordination and Jurisdiction, Powers evidently given him by Christ's Commission, and by refusing the Communion of those who submit to this Power. Mr. *Wetmore*, I know, denies that Christ has given these Powers to Presbyters: But then he knows likewise, that I deny any “*Episcopal Power superiour to that of Presbyters*”. So that his Argument and mine are, in this Respect, parallel. But,

3. “*The Separation*” is not “*kept on Foot unjustifiably in Old-England.*” The *English* Dissenters don't need me for an Advocate; nor shall I enter into the Dispute as it stands between *them* and the Church of *England*, which is different from that between *us* and the *episcopal Separation* in *New-England*. I shall only observe, under this Head, that the Reasons of the Dissenters leaving the Church of *England*, are sufficiently known to the World, and I believe our *episcopal* Dissenters in this Country would heartily rejoice if they could produce half so good Reasons, to justify their Conduct in separating from us. The *English* Dissenters have always had such among themselves as have sufficiently justified their Conduct to the World. Among others, Mr. *Peirce* did this in his Day, to the Satisfaction of the Foreign Protestants, to whom Dr. *Nichols* had appealed: And the *Doctor* would never make any Reply. 'Tis for this that Mr. *Wetmore*, in so ungenerous a Manner, tramples on Mr. *Peirce*'s Ashes, representing him as “*a wicked and false*” Person, p. 22. and as one whose *Word* is not to be taken in any plain Matter of *Fact*, p. 24. Thus abusing the Memory of that great Man, who, while he lived, triumphed over all that, in this Cause, opposed him. The Author who, in the Character of a *Dissenting Gentleman*, is now managing the same Controversy with Mr. *White*, has shewn himself sufficiently able to defend his Cause. And has in his first Letter, in a very convincing Manner

Manner proved, that the Charge of Schism does not lie against the Dissenters in *England*; And in his *Second* set the Dissenters Exceptions to the Liturgy, in so just and strong a Light, as must (I think) be convincing to every unprejudiced Mind, as well as fully vindicated his *Former* from all Mr. *White* has said in Reply to it.

Having thus (I think fully) prov'd, That the general Notion of a national Establishment, does not infer the Necessity of our conforming to the Church of *England*; that the Laws which establish that Constitution do not extend to this Country; that there is no Divine Law requiring this of us; and that there was nothing schismatical, or favouring of Schism, in the Conduct of our Forefathers, or in the Constitution of the Churches they erected in this Land; I suppose the first Question sufficiently answered, and that I may now, without any Scruple, conclude, that the Inhabitants of the *British* Plantations, those of *New-England* in particular, are not obliged in DUTY, by the Laws of God or Man, to submit or conform to the *Prelatic Church* established in the *South Part* of the Kingdom of *Great-Britain*. I shall therefore conclude this Head with a Remark or two by Way of INFERENCE from what has been said,

I. Those who have conformed to the Church of *England* in this Country, are not to expect that either GOD or the KING will consider their Conformity as an *Act of Obedience*, or esteem them as the *better Subjects* on the Account of it. The Church of *Rome* places the highest Merit in *unrequired Duties, uncommanded Acts of Obedience*. If the Terms I use are contradictory, they are so much the more suitable to express so absurd and inconsistent a Notion. This impious Doctrine is condemned by the whole Protestant World, and by none more expressly than the Church of *England*, which says (ART. xiv.) “ *Voluntary Works, besides, over and above* “ *GOD's Commandments, which they call WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION, cannot be taught without Arrogancy and* “ *Impiety*”.

"*Impiety*". Since therefore there is no Command of God requiring our Conformity to the *Church of England*, those who have gone from us to that Church, can't teach or expect that God will accept it as an Act of Obedience, without being condemned for *Arrogance* and *Impiety*, by that very Church whose Communion they profess to embrace.

Our gracious SOVEREIGN, as he makes the Laws of the Land the Rule of his Government, so he always recommends it to his Subjects to make them the Standard of their Obedience; and neither desires nor expects any more from them than the Laws require. You deceive your selves therefore, if you expect your Conformity to Episcopacy should be accepted as an Act of Obedience, either of GOD or the KING. You may please your selves with the Tho't that you are, on this Account, *better Subjects* or *better Christians*: But 'tis all Delusion and a meer Dream; your proper Judges in both these Characters, will reject it as such.

II. It hence follows, that the Communion of our Churches is *most safe*. There has been a long Dispute between the *Church* and the *Dissenters* in *England*. The *Dissenters* have great and (I think) *unanswerable* Objections against the Government and Worship of the established Church. The *best Advocates* the Church has ever had, don't pretend to justify many of the Things objected against, as being *necessary*, or indeed *good in themselves*; but only as Things that may be submitted to, and used, without Sin, when established by lawful Authority. And some of them plainly own, that they wish they were changed or quite taken away. Now there is not a single Objection made by the *English Dissenters* against the Constitution or Ceremonies of the *Church*, but what has the same *full Force* and *undiminished Weight* in this Country as in *England*. If therefore the *English Dissenters* are in the *Right*, we are certainly justified in not conforming to the *Church*. But if we should suppose the *Dissenters* in the *Wrong*, if we should think they ought, from a Regard to the Laws of their Country, to submit to these Things; yet this

this don't in the least affect us, who live in a Country to which those Laws do not extend.

In a Word, All the Arguments against the Church of England conclude fully in our Favour, and the better Half of the Arguments that have ever been offered in favour of that Church, don't in the least operate against us. Nay they help our Cause; for tho' you will deny our having an Establishment by *express* and *positive Law*; you must own we are established by *Agreement* and *Prescription*, which is *all the Establishment* the primitive Church had in the *best* and *purest* Ages of it. Those that have conformed to the Church in this Country, have acted contrary to the Judgment of the *wisest* and *best* Part of the Church of England. The first Protestant Convocation in Queen ELIZABETH's Reign, met Jan. 12. 1562, 3 †. After they had agreed upon the xxxix ARTICLES, they entred upon the Consideration of the Ceremonies. There were great Debates upon this Head, and when they came to vote, it was found, on a Division of the lower House, that *Forty Three* disapproved of them, and but *Thirty Five* liked them ‡. Thus the *Puritans* were clearly the Majority: But in Convocations absent Members are allowed to vote by *Proxies* or Attorneys, and when these Proxies were given in, the Numbers stood thus, *Fifty Eight* against the Ceremonies, and *Fifty Nine* for them ‡. So that, as Mr. Neal justly observes, "By the Majority of *one single Voice*, and that not a Person present to hear the Debates, but a *Proxy*, it was determined to make no Alteration in the Ceremonies" *. There has ever since been a Number of *excellent Persons* in the Church of England, to whom these Ceremonies have been a Burden, and who submit to them merely in Deference to the Authority which has established them. But you, *my Brethren*, chuse that Communion for the sake of those very Things, which so great a Part of that

† *Prince's Chron.* p. 220. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 223. * *Neal's Hist. Purit.* Vol. I. p. 182, 183.

Church esteem it's *Imperfections* and *Blemishes*, and wish to have in a *legal* Way removed. I say you chuse it for these very Things; for your Rulers do not impose these on you, nor require your Submission to them. And a Regard to the *Unity* and *Peace* of the Country you live in, and of the Churches in which you were baptised and educated, instead of influencing you to conform to these *disputed* Ceremonies, would operate quite the other Way. In this View of Things, I have often wondred at your *Clergy's* recommending such *Books of Controversy* to you, as they often do. For it is evident that such Books as defend the Church as an *Establishment*, and justify the Ceremonies as *indifferent Things*, to be submitted to in *Obedience to the Law* that enjoins them, and from a *Regard to the Unity and Peace* of the visible Church, are really pleading *our Cause*, and not *your's*. I believe the *Authors* of some of them, had they lived in this Country, would have joined in Communion with our Churches, and have condemned *your Separation* as much as I do. I am sure their Principles directly lead to this. But I proceed to

THE SECOND QUESTION.

Whether it be EXPEDIENT, or proper in Point of PRUDENCE, for those who are already settled in such Churches as have so long subsisted in New-England, to forsake them and embrace that Communion?

Though I hope you are convinced, by what has been already said, that you were not strictly obliged in Duty, either to God or Man, to forsake our Communion, and embrace the Episcopal; yet, it may be, some of you may still think, you have acted a reasonable Part, such an one as became reasonable Creatures in your Circumstances, and consequently, what you can well account for, in *Point of Prudence*, to your own Minds and to the World. And, I suppose, many of you, indeed the most that have forsaken us, for some Years past, have acted upon this Principle, and gone off to the Church, rather from the Notion of it's being a good *Prudential*,

tial, than from any Thought of it's being necessary in Point of absolute Duty. You have acted upon an Opinion that the *Constitution and Practices* of the Episcopal Church are well calculated to promote the temporal and eternal Interests of Mankind; and even better suited to answer these great Intentions, than the *Constitution and Practices* of the Churches of *New-England*. Now I apprehend that this is a *great and a dangerous Mistake*; and if I can convince you of this, I trust, my Brethren, you will retract what you have acted on this Misapprehension of Things. And with an earnest Desire, and some Hope of this, I now invite you to a *serious and impartial Consideration* of the Matter.

Mr. *Wetmore* thinks himself able to justify your Conduct, in this View of it. p. 34. "Those that propagate the Church of England in Connecticut, would not put themselves to so many Difficulties, and take so much Pains, if they did not believe the Glory of God and the Welfare of many Souls, were to be promoted thereby; nor should we endeavour to proselite some, if we did not believe it the Duty and INTEREST of all to become Proselytes. and that it would be every Way for the Benefit and Advantage of the Country, for the present Age, and for Posterity, to have all Parties and Sects laid aside, and the national Constitution submitted to".

There is one Thing in this Paragraph, I could wish Mr. *Wetmore* had omitted, because a Reply to it may seem invidious; but as he has thrown it in my Way, I think, I ought not to let it pass without a Remark.----I mean his representing those who propagate the Church of *England in Connecticut* as encountering "so MANY DIFFICULTIES, and taking SO MUCH PAINS." A Stranger to this Colony might from this think, that our *episcopal Missionaries*, tho' they were Men of the most *unwearied Application* to the Duties of their Office, were *starving* for want of Support; or *suffered Persecution* from the Government they live under, and were remarkable for the *Meekness and Patience* with which they encountered their *distinguishing Difficulties*. And I am sorry to say it,

it, these Gentlemen take a great deal of Pains, and use some very *unjustifiable* Means, to represent themselves, and one another to the World, in such Characters as these. Of this Kind are the *ungenerous* and *unjust Complaints* they are almost every Year sending Home of this Government. A Government which gives them more *Indulgence*, and treats them with *greater Respect*, than I suppose was ever shewn to any *Sect of Dissenters*, who bare so inconsiderable a Proportion to the Body of the People among whom they dwell. For, to say nothing of *personal Respects* shewn them by the principal Gentlemen in the Colony, the Law obliges their Hearers to pay toward their Support, in the same Proportion as our Hearers do to our's; and our Collectors constantly gather the Rate and pay it to them; and if this be not sufficient, the Law enables every Church to tax themselves in such Sums as are necessary, [and for Mr. *Wetmore* in particular, who here reckons himself among these Sufferers, tho' he lives in the Colony of *New York*, the *Presbyterian Minister* who lives in his Parish, with all his Hearers, is obliged to pay Taxes to him] Nay, so far are they from being laid under *any Restrictions* by the Laws of this Government, that while all other Ministers within, as well as without the Colony, are forbid, under severe Penalties, preaching in any Parish not under their immediate Care, unless invited by the Minister and Church, these Gentlemen, whether Inhabitants of the Colony or not, may *itinerate, propagate* their Principles, and *propagate* their Party, when and where they please, without Exception. And those Gentlemen that have embraced that Communion, have not only retained their Posts, but sometimes been promoted, to a Degree that is surprising in so *popular and elective* a Government. And I must add, to a Degree that will no longer consist with the Honour or Safety of the Government, if they continue their *Disaffection* to our *civil Constitution*, and their *unreasonable Complaints* against a Government that cherishes them in it's Bosom. A Gentleman (and 'tis generally supposed a *Clergyman*) of the Church of England, in a *Letter* dated *Connecticut, March 7. 1746, 7.* published

published in the *Boston Evening-Post* No. 606; brags very much of the Number of Officers, civil and military, in their Communion. Whether this Gentleman ever join'd with his Brethren, in representing Matters to their Friends in *England*, as tho' those who conformed to them in this Country, were immediately turned out of their Posts or Offices, I don't certainly know, because he conceals his Name. If he has, I could wish him to consider how he can reconcile his Conduct to common *Honesty*.

If the Case be as I have represented it, what can Mr. *Wetmore* mean by representing himself and Brethren, as Men distinguished by their Difficulties. Had he been writing to the Society, I should suspect the View was to have their Pay advanced, as another *Missionary* some Years ago, recommended his Brother to them, by representing him as teaching School all the Week to a Number of poor Children, and on Saturday Afternoon walking a dozen Miles in order to read Prayers in a Church next Day ||; when all the Neighbourhood knew, tho' the Society did not, that the Children were no poorer, nor the Master worse paid than others; and that the young Gentleman walked the twelve Miles on a very good Horse. However it answered the End, the School-Master was taken into the Society's Pay ||. If something of this Sort was not aimed at by Mr. *Wetmore*, I can resolve it into nothing but that "Bigotry and Self-Admiration", which, as he remarks, p. 31. "Zealots of every Sect---are remarkably tinged with".

But the Thing principally to be regarded, in the Passage under Consideration, is Mr. *Wetmore's* representing it as "every Way for the Benefit and Advantage of the Country, for the present Age, and for Posterity", that we should become Proselytes to the Church of *England*. Now if he be able to prove this, I must own that it would be prudent for us all to

|| Abstract of the Society's Proceeding annexed to the Bp. of Gloucester's Sermon, p. 51.

come

come over to you. I mean upon the Supposition of it's being *lawful*; which I am willing, for the present, to suppose, tho' I expect to disprove it before I finish. But I find no Proof at all of this, unless by the Expression of having "*all Parties and Sects laid aside*", he intended to suggest that *Unity* could no other Way be obtained. If this be his Meaning, 'tis easy replying, that an universal Conformity to the *New-England Churches* would have the same happy Effect. And this can't possibly be a good *prudential* Reason for any particular Persons conforming to you; but on the contrary, is a *strong Reason* for your returning to us, since we have so *vast a Superiority* to you in Numbers; perhaps, taking the whole Country, Twenty to One. He that would take the most probable Way to produce *Unity*, ought certainly, where the Disproportion is so great, to join with the Majority.

But, tho' Mr. *Wetmore* has not thought proper to offer any Proof under this Head, which one would have expected from him, when he undertook the Province of *vindicating your Conduct*; yet I shall offer some Proof of the Contrary, or mention a few of the many Disadvantages, I apprehend would follow from it, and give you the Reasons of my entertaining such Apprehensions. And I shall think myself sufficiently rewarded for the Labour of it, if I can prevail with you to consider them impartially, and to act like prudent Persons under the Influence of the Love of your Country and your Posterity.

Wherefore,

I. The great Number of *unnecessary ecclesiastical Officers* in the Church of *England*, and the *immense Charge* of supporting them, argues the *IMPRUDENCE* of our submitting to that Constitution.

The Jewish Dispensation was a very *costly Religion*; and it was agreeable to the Wisdom and Goodness of God that it should be so. It was designed only for one Nation; and that Nation, so long as they observed the Law given them, were by the special and even miraculous Blessing of God, to be a rich People. Such a Nation might well enough support a

pompous

pompous Temple, a vastly numerous Train of Officers, and prodigiously expensive Sacrifices.

But the *Christian Dispensation* is designed for all Mankind; and the *Poor* in particular are to have the *Gospel preached* unto them. And the *Gospel Church* is suited to this Design, 'tis not a costly Religion Christ has instituted. I suppose it will be found, on a just Comparison, that the *Christian Religion* may be supported with a less Expence than any other Religion, true or false, that ever obtained in the World. I don't mean that it is so in *Fact*; I know there are prodigious Revenues assign'd for the Support of it, in all *Papish* and some *Protestant Countries*. But the expensive Articles of it do not properly belong to Christianity, nor have they any Foundation in the *Gospel*; but were introduced into the *Christian Church* by a foolish and sinful Affectation of imitating the pompous Worship and costly Rights either of the *Jews* or the *Heathens*.

A wise Man would chuse such a Constitution in *Church* or *State*, wherein the great Ends of Society may be effectually answered, with as little Burden and Charge as may be to the Community. This he would especially do, in a Country which, like this, does not abound in Riches and Wealth. 'Tis an Argument of *Prudence* in our *Civil Rulers*, that they put the Administration of public Affairs into such a Form, that the great Ends of civil Society may be obtained with the least public Charge. And for the same Reasons, it must be allowed prudent in the Body of the People, to chuse and fall in with such an ecclesiastical Constitution, as does, in the cheapest and most easy Manner, answer the great and important Designs of religious Society. 'Tis necessary to the answering these Intentions, that there be a standing Ministry in the Church; or a sufficient Number of Men devoted to study and promote the eternal Interests of others. Both the *Precepts* and the *Craft* of the christian Religion necessarily require that these be decently and honourably supported. And the Charge of this can't be tho't unreasonable, by any Man that has a proper Regard to religious Society, or a real Desire that the Ends of it should be answered. But a wise and re-

ligious Man may justly think much of the Charge of supporting *supernumerary Ecclesiasticks*, or a long Train of Church Officers, without whom the great Intentions of Church Society might as well, and perhaps better, be obtained. And that there are such, many such in the Church of *England*, I believe no Man, thoroughly acquainted with that Constitution, will deny.

The three Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons are divided and sub-divided into such a Number of Offices, as is not very easily reckoned up. There are *Archbishops*, *Bishops*, and *Suffragans*, of the higher Order; *Deans*, *Canons*, and *Prebendaries*, in the *Cathedrals*; *Rural Deans*, *Archdeacons*, and *Commissaries*, that pretend to exercise a Sort of Authority over the inferiour Clergy, tho' they are themselves but in the Order of *Priesthood*. There are *Rectors*, *Vicars*, and *Curates*, among the *parochial Clergy*. And in the spiritual Courts, *Chancellors*, *Sherrogates*, *Proctors*, *Apparitors*, and I know not how many more Officers †. Now these all must be maintained; the Constitution that appoints them, must some Way or other provide for their Support. And I believe it will be found true, on a just Calculation, that it costs more to support one *single Cathedral Church* in *England*, than to maintain all the Ministers in the Colony of *Connecticut*. It takes the Tithes of all *England*, besides the vast Revenues arising from the Rents of all the *Church Lands* to support the numerous Clergy in the *English Church*.

I will now suppose a Case, which I pray God may never happen; I will, for once, suppose the People of *New-England* so insatuated as to become generally Episcopal, and to have the Church of *England*, in all it's Pomp and Splendor, by Law established here. In this Case I can't pretend to say how many Bishops, Cathedral Churches and spiritual Courts we should have in the whole Land; but will suppose one of each

† There are about *forty* different Sorts of Officers in the national Church of *England*. *Prince's Hon.* p. 236.

in every Government. And now, *my Brethren*, count the Cost, and say whether the Country can possibly support the prodigious Expence, or must sink under the insupportable Burden of it? Let your own Consciences say, Whether you would not have Reason to lament your Folly, when it was too late to remedy it; and whether your latest Posterity would not have Reason to esteem you as the Instruments of entailing Misery and Poverty upon them?

You may perhaps flatter yourselves by supposing either that the SOCIETY for propagating the Gospel would bear this Charge for you; or that, when you found the Burden too heavy for you, you might cast it from you. These are *all the Hopes* I think you can have in this Case. They are both of them *vain Delusions*. And, as it is of Importance, that your Eyes be opened to see that they are so, I will distinctly consider them.

The Society then, are not able, nor do they design to bear the Charge for you. Their "*certain Fund for this great Work*" of propagating the Gospel abroad, "*is no more than 57 l. 10s. a Year*", as we are told by the Bishop of Gloucester, one of their Members *. "*The annual Subscriptions to it, amount to little above 600 l.*" * "*The whole Expence, which the Society has been at this Year (Anno 1739.) amounts to above 3800 l.*" † What is wanting in the Produce of their certain *Fund*, and annual *Subscriptions*, they have nothing but *casual Benefactions* to make good. These are too uncertain Things to be depended on, and will undoubtedly grow less, as the Eyes of the People in *England* are opened to see that what they give, under a Notion of sending the Gospel to a People that *never heard* of it, is misapplied to the Support of a Faction in a Country, where the Gospel is as fully and faithfully preached as perhaps in any Part of the christian World. And as these *Benefactions* abate, the Society must lessen, instead of increasing their Expences.

* Sermon before the Society, p. 30. † p. 31.

If you would but open your Eyes you might see; nay you must see, that the Society's supporting your Ministers, is design'd but for a temporary short-liv'd Thing. At first, the Presence was, that your Ministers would *always* be maintained without any Charge to you. Now they require you to do Part, and in a little Time, the whole Burden will be left on your Shoulders. This will *undoubtedly* be the Case, if ever the Church of England should obtain a *legal Establishment* here. The Society erect no Missions in *Maryland* and *Virginia*, because the Church is by Law, in a Sort, established in those Provinces. And yet I can hardly think Mr. Wetmore himself will tax me with "*Bigotry and Self-Admiration*" for saying, that there is *full as much* Occasion for propagating the Gospel in those Provinces as in *New-England*. The Bishop of *Glocester*, speaking of the Plantations in *America*, says to the Society, "*If we don't take Care to teach them true Religion, they will not remain long without being taught any Religion at all: They will become a Prey to Popery* †." His Lordship must excuse me in thinking, either that the Society do not act upon *this Principle*, or else that they are not very well acquainted with the State of the *British Plantations in America*; otherwise I can't possibly account for it, that they have not a single *Missionary* in *Maryland*, in which Province, I suppose, there are more Papists and more popish Priests than in all the other Plantations on the Continent put together.

Since I have mentioned the Bishop of *Glocester's* Sermon before the Society, I can't forbear transcribing a Sentence or two more from it. "The Charter under which this Society acts, was granted, to provide an orthodox Clergy in our Plantations, Colonies and Factories in *America*, where many want the Administration of God's Word and Sacraments, and seem to be abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity. And for want of Instruction in true Religion, are in Danger of being perverted by Romish Priests and Jesuits to their Superstition. This was the PRIMARY AND IMME-

† Sermon before the Society, p. 14.

“*DIATE INTENTION* of the Charter” †. The Society which acts upon this Charter were (as appears by the *Abstract* of their Proceedings for the Year before) at the Expence of above a *thousand* Pounds *Sterling* yearly, in maintaining *episcopal Missionaries* in *New-England*, and had not a single *Missionary* in *Virginia* nor *Maryland*; but *two* in *North-Carolina*, where there are no other Ministers of any other Sort; and *two* in the *West-India Islands*. Can any Person, at all acquainted with the State of Religion in the *British America*, read this Account without Astonishment! Can this be called propagating the Gospel? Is this acting agreeable to the *primary and immediate Intention* of their Charter? Is it not rather to be esteemed abusing the Trust reposed in them, and perverting the charitable Design of such pious Persons, as must be supposed to give their Money to promote the *primary and immediate Intention* of the Society’s Charter? Will it be pretended that *New-England* is the Country described in the Charter, as recited by his Lordship? Can it be said that our People are “*abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity*” or that they are “*in Danger of being perverted by Romish Priests and Jesuits to their Superstition*”? Why then must such *Numbers of Missionaries* be sent hither, when there are so many Places truly in the Condition mentioned in the Society’s Charter, of whom little or no Care is taken? We are told of the *Portuguese Missionaries* in the *East-Indies*, “*That they took no Pains to perswade the Heathen to embrace Christianity, but were very diligent to oblige the Christians of St. Thomas’s to profess Subjection to the Pope*” *. I would not willingly suppose the *Protestant Society* for propagating the Gospel, acting upon such a *Party Spirit* as this, or esteeming it a Matter of greater Importance to convert Men from *Presbyterianism* to *Episcopacy*, than from *Heathenism* to *Christianity*. And yet I see no possible Way of avoiding this, but

† Sermon before the Society, p. 14. * *Millar’s Propagation of Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 150.

by supposing, that they, on whose Information they depend, do impose upon and deceive them.

I can but seldom get a Sight of the *annual Accounts* published by the Society, yet I am able to produce *some Instances* wherein they have been thus imposed upon. Thus Mr. *Checkley*, Missionary at *Providence*, by his Letter dated *November 1. 1739*, acquaints the Society, that “ *He hath*
“ *sometimes performed divine Service, and preached on a Wed-*
“ *nesday, at Taunton, twenty Miles distant from Providence,*
“ *where the Congregation consists of more than three hundred*
“ *Persons, many of whom were never before in any Christian*
“ *Church*” * No Man acquainted with *Taunton*, will easily believe that there can be found many Persons in it, much less a considerable Part of a Congregation, consisting of above *three hundred People*, as the Words fairly imply, that never were in any *Christian Church* before Mr. *Checkley* visited them; unless it be those who believe (as perhaps Mr. *Checkley* does) that no Church deserves the Name of *Christian*, but that of *England*. But if this was his Meaning, he imposed on the Society, and such pious People as are induced to contribute to his Support, by reading his Accounts. These honest Men think the People of *Taunton* are meer Heathen, that never heard the Name of CHRIST. They suppose they are really propagating the Gospel, when paying Mr. *Checkley* for travelling to *Taunton*, to countenance and support a few discontented People, who declared themselves of the Church of *England*, because they could not have their unreasonable Humour, in the Place of building a *Meeting House*, or in being made a distinct *Parish*. So again, Mr. *Punderson*, one of the Society’s ITINERANT Missionaries in *New-England*, in his Letter of *June 18. 1739*, writes, “ That there
“ is not any more considerable Alteration in the *Parishes* under
“ his Care, than that the Temper and Spirit of many of
“ their dissenting Brethren seem much altered for the better,

* Bp. of *Gloucester*’s Sermon, p. 54, 55.

“ inasmuch

" infomuch that many of them on Christmas Day last, re-
 " sorted to the Church, and behaved *soberly and decently*.
 " Which is an *unspeakable Comfort* to him"†. If this worthy
Itinerant has gained no Converts to God and Christ, and Ho-
 linefs, it seems he has gained some to *Christmas*, and such like
Frolicks; and this *considerable Alteration* fills his pious Soul
 with UNSPEAKABLE COMFORT. I wonder what Notion
 such Men have of Religion; they know there is not one sin-
 gle Syllable in the New-Testament, that *prescribes*, or in the
 least Degree *encourages* the Observation of Christmas, and
 they may know that *Sobriety* and *practical Religion* decrease in
 the Country, in Proportion as the Observation of *Holidays*
 grows; yet they can represent this as a *considerable Point* gain-
 ed, an *Alteration* for the better, and what gives them *unspea-*
kable Comfort. I wish Mr. Punderfon may know the Satis-
 faction that arises in the Mind of a Minister, from *winning*
Souls to Christ, and *turning many unto Righteousness*; I am
 confident it will cure him of calling this an *unspeakable Comfort*.
 In the mean Time, when the Society, or those that read this
 Account in *England*, find it thus represented as a *considerable*
Alteration, in the Spirit and Temper of the People of *New-*
England, that they *behave soberly and decently* in Time of di-
 vine Worship at Church, when they happen to be there;
 and find a *Reverend Missionary* representing this as an *unspea-*
kable Comfort to him; what can they conclude, but that these
 People used before to disturb the Congregation, & affront and
 abuse the Minister in Time of divine Worship? Nay, con-
 sidering the Disposition of Mankind to magnify *Party Stories*,
 can it be tho't strange, if some shou'd from hence take Oc-
 casion to suppose and report that good Mr. Punderfon used to
 officiate in Danger of his Life, but now can do it with Safe-
 ty? If any have this View of the Matter, they will not won-
 der that this is such an *unspeakable Comfort* to him, and that
 he sends the News to *England*, that all the good Men in the

 † Ibid. p. 55.

Nation may partake with him in the *Satisfaction* and Joy of it. I hope the People of *Groton*, and in all other Parts of the Country, when they see what an Improvement *these Missionaries* make of their keeping *Christmas*, will reform that *bad Practice*, and discover that they value the Religion of their Country, and the Morals of their Posterity above a Feast or a Frolick.

These, and such like, are the Accounts the Society receive from their Missionaries, which induce them to take so much Care of *New-England*, to the Neglect of other Places, which are really *abandon'd to Atheism and Infidelity*, or in great Danger of being perverted by *Romish Priests and Jesuits* to their Superstitions. I esteem myself therefore doing a real Service to Religion, and to the Honour of the Society in exposing the mean and wicked Arts, by which they have too long been imposed on.

Whenever therefore the Society, or those pious People who betrust them with the Distribution of their Charity, shall be truly informed of the State of Religion in the *British America*, instead of affording you any further Assistance, they will doubtless remove *all* their Missionaries from *New-England*, which has no Need of them, to other Parts of *America*, where they are really wanted, and might truly serve the common Interest of Christianity, propagate the Gospel, and enlarge the Redeemer's Kingdom among Men.

Upon the Whole, if you should be so imprudent as to bring this *insupportable* Charge upon yourselves, you are not to expect that it will be at all abated by any Help from the Society. Your only Hope for yourselves and your Posterity must arise from the Supposition that you can throw off the Burden when you find it too heavy to bear. And you have been sometimes told, that at present the Church requires nothing but what is *lawful and easy*; and it will be soon enough to dissent, when she requires that which is *unlawful or intolerable*: But a wiser Man has told you, *A prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hideth himself: But the simple pass on* and

and are punished *. And if you are so simple as to make the fatal Experiment, you will wish you had taken the Caution given. It will be *too late* to dissent from the Church, when once it has gained a *legal Establishment* in the Country. For if it may be supposed (which yet is very questionable) that you could obtain a *Toleration*, yet you must expect to pay towards the Support of the *established Church*, as the Dissenters in *England* now do. Instead therefore of acting like wise Men, you act a very *imprudent* and *dangerous Part*, and are making a Yoke which will terribly gall your Necks and the Necks of your Posterity after you. Again,

II. The arbitrary Power of *imposing Ministers* on People, or *removing them without hearing the People's Objections*, is another Argument against the Expedience or *Prudence* of conforming to the *Episcopal Church*.

Every Church, or worshipping Congregation, has a *Right*, by the Laws of Nature and Christianity, to choose their own Pastor. This is a Right which no wise Man would willingly give up. The best Interests of your selves and Families, will be greatly affected by the Ministry you and they set under. Now is it possible you should be willing to intrust this Right with you know not who; as is done in the Church of *England*? There are few Parishes in *England* that have Liberty to choose their Minister. The *Right of Patronage*, that is, the Right of appointing the Minister of a particular Parish, belongs in some Places to the Crown, in others to the Bishop, in some to one of the Universities or some other Corporation, and in most to some particular Person of the Nobility or Gentry. It is an Estate that either descends from Father to Son, or is bought and sold as other Estates are. By this Means it may, and frequently does, come to pass, that the *sole Right* of appointing or choosing the Minister, shall be

* *Prov.* xxii. 3.

vested in the most *ignorant* or the most *vicious* and debauched Person in the Parish, and he that takes no Thought or Care about his *own Soul*, must be the only man to say who shall have the Charge of the *Souls of all his Neighbours*. It is very much owing to this, that there are so many ignorant & vicious Persons among the *inferiour* Clergy in the Church of *England*; a *drunken Patron* generally presenting such a Minister to the Living that happens to be in his Gift, as he expects will prove a good *Pot-Companion*. And can you think, *my Brethren*, you are acting like *reasonable* Beings, capable of a happy or miserable *Eternity*, in embracing and promoting a Constitution which may render you, or your Posterity after you, liable to have such Ministers set over you in this Manner? Would it not have been much more prudent for you to have remained in our Communion, which would have secured you in your just and very valuable Right of chusing your own Ministers?

You will, it may be, tell me, That you do now choose your Ministers as well as we. And I suppose the *Society* have generally appointed the Person you asked for. But what sort of Security can you have that they will always do so? It is perfectly consistent with the Constitution of the Church of *England* for them to do otherwise; and send you what Ministers they please, without at all regarding your Petitions or *Recommendations*: Tho' it may not be quite so *politic* for them to exert this Authority over you, 'till you are a little faster fixed in the Principles you have but newly embraced. And if there were Occasion for it, I could produce Instances of the *Society's* appointing Ministers for particular Places, without the People's recommending the Persons, or so much as knowing them before they were sent; and such Persons too, in some Instances, as no religious Man would have recommended, or could sit easy under.

But if it happen that you have a Minister worthy of his Office, how much soever you may like the Man, whatever Expence you may have been at, in sending him for Orders, and settling him among you, How little Security have you of

his Continuance with you, or even of your being allowed to shew your Reasons why he should not be removed from you? This I mentioned in the marginal Note annexed to my SERMON, p. 24. "This Want of Discipline is sometimes seen and complained of by the Laity of that Church; as for Instance, when their Ministers are removed from them without any sufficient Reason, nay, when the People think they have such Objections as would effectually prevent a Removal, if they could find any Body to judge between them and their Ministers." When I wrote this I had *particular Instances* in my Mind; and supposed the *Hint* was plain enough to lead your Thoughts to the same Instances; especially as one of them had then newly happened, and was the Subject of much Conversation, and a great deal of Complaint among some of you at that Time. I expected therefore that Mr. *Wetmore* would have attempted a Vindication of it. But he judged it *safest* for him to say nothing at all upon the Head; and, I own, it was prudent in him to endeavour to *hush* such Matters; for they are what no wise Man will ever undertake to justify.

Omitting the Instances of this Kind at *New-London, Norwalk, &c.* I shall mention only that at *Fairfield*. Mr. *Henry Caner* was settled, by the Society Minister to a small Episcopal Congregation in this Town about twenty Years ago. He, from Time to Time, wrote the Society Accounts of his *great Success*. The Congregation increased to such a Degree that they were obliged, he said, to build Galleries in the Church, sufficient to contain *an hundred* People. The Account, as printed in the *Abstract of the Society's Proceedings*, says, *two hundred*: But as I am informed that Mr. *Caner* corrected the printed Account with his Pen, in the Copy he lent; and as I have no Desire to *aggravate* the Matter, I mention the Number as he corrected it. Some Time after he mentioned to the Society the building of a new Church at *Fairfield*, and gave this as the Reason of it, "*The old one being much too little for the Congregation*". At the same Time he described his Parishioners as "*a very good-natur'd industrious*

trious People, that well deserv'd the Society's Favour", and says, "the Number of his Communicants is Eighty two"†. If he means he had *this* Number of Communicants in *Fairfield*, as I conclude the Society, and the World understood him, for he gives a distinct Account of the Church at *Norwalk* afterwards, in the same Letter: If, I say, he is thus to be understood, I must suppose that he admitted Infants to the *Communion*, for he never had, I am well assured, that Number of adult Persons for his stated Hearers. His People here are so far from allowing that Want of Room in the old Church was the Occasion of building the New; that some of them of good Credit have declared that the old House, even without Galleries, was more than sufficient for the Congregation. And that except *Christmas*, or some such extraordinary Season, they were not at all crowded on the Ground Floor. They say, they built the new Church at a great Expence, to accommodate Mr. *Caner*, by having it near his Habitation; and some of them, that in Consideration of their doing this, and to induce them to it, he promised, that he would never remove from them. But this notwithstanding, on his receiving an Invitation to *Boston*, he immediately determined to leave them, and without waiting for Orders from the Bishop or Society removed to *Boston*, and was formally inducted there. I don't pretend to a certain Knowledge of all these Facts, but have recited them as People of that Church, whom I take to be worthy of Credit, have represented them. And whether they are true or false, the People who believe them, and look upon themselves injured by them, ought in all Reason and Equity, to have had an Opportunity of producing what Evidence they had to support them, before some proper and competent Judge. And that ecclesiastical Constitution which does not allow of, and make Provision for this, can never recommend itself to any reasonable Man. What, my Brethren, can you think it prudent to submit to a Constitution, on which your Ministers, when you have been at ever so

† Vid. Abst. of the Bp. of Gloucesters Ser. p. 51.

much Charge in obtaining and settling them, may leave you when they please, without having any Person to judge between you and them !

III. The *State of ecclesiastical Discipline* in the Episcopal Churches in *America*, renders it *inexpedient* for us to go over to their Communion.

Discipline is as absolutely necessary to the well-being of the Church, as any other Institution of the Gospel. Mr. *Wetmore* allows the Necessity of it, p. 27. and he labours pretty hard to prove that you have and exercise it in your Churches. And rather than own this your great and *essential* Defect, he has contrived a Discipline for you, which has no Foundation in the Gospel, and is really a great deal worse than none. I intend under my last general Head to shew, That there is hardly a Shadow of ecclesiastical Discipline in the Church of *England* at Home, and still less (if less can be) in the episcopal Congregations in *America*, and to urge this as an Argument against the *Lawfulness* of our embracing that Communion. But as I now consider the Matter in a *merely prudential* View, I will, for once suppose that you have some Discipline among you, I will take Mr. *Wetmore's* own Account of the Nature of it ; and see what Reason you have to value it, and how far you recommend your *Prudence* to the World in submitting to it.

He tells us, p. 26. of “ a Commission large enough, given to such Ministers as have the Care of *American* Congregations, to enable them, in God’s Name, and in Behalf of CHRIST, to do every Thing that Men’s comfortable Hopes and Happiness require to be done ; altho’ they act in Subordination, and are obliged to pay a proper Deference to their Superiours the Bishops”. He goes on, after allowing what he calls a *Chiefly* to the Bishops, (which unusual and ambiguous Word, by the Way, means every thing, or nothing, as Occasion requires) to say, p. 27. “ The Presbyters subordinate to them, have as much Power in the Government of their several Flocks, as Wisdom and Prudence

"dence can think proper to entrust them with". Hitherto he is extremely cautious, and talks wholly in general Terms. I wish he had been a little more particular, and told us plainly, Whether a Presbyter in *England* be liable to be punished as Mr. *Cartwright* (mentioned in my *Sermon*) was for pretending to exercise Discipline on a scandalous Parishioner; and if so, whether their Presbyters in *America* have a larger Commission than those in *England*. For if these Things be as I suppose they are, this same *Chiefly* in the Bishops is (what the Word may well enough signify) a real *Sou'ignty*. And then Mr. *Wetmore* must mean, that as much Power of this Kind "as *Wisdom and Prudence* can think proper to entrust" the Presbyters of the Church of *England* with, is, in reality, none at all. Thus I should have been apt to understand him, were it not for what follows, "Nay we can say, even as *Jerom* to *Evagrius*, *Quid facit Episcopus, quod Presbyter, non faciat, excepta Ordinatione*". This sets the Bishop and Presbyter upon a Par, in every Thing except Ordination; and consequently reduces the Bishop's *Chiefly* in Government and Discipline to what I believe it ought to be reduced to, just nothing at all.

Having thus, to serve the present Occasion, exalted the Presbyter's Authority to so high a Pitch, as to make him equal to the Bishop, in the Affair of Discipline, Mr. *Wetmore* tells us, p. 28. "That such Affairs (viz. all disciplinary Affairs) are left with the Minister to determine, according to his best Prudence, with the Authority belonging to his Office". But then, tho' it is not quite consistent with his adopting *Jerom's* Saying, he would reserve some Superiory, to the Bishop in this Case; But such an one as will be of no Service to you. He don't allow of an Appeal to the Bishop, but only a Complaint against the injurious Priest. His Words are, That the Priest "has only to expect, that his Doings may be referred to his Bishop; unto whose Judgment he must submit, as well as the Party complaining, when Time will give Leave to obtain it". Thus then the Matter stands according to him, every Minister of the Church of
England

England in America, has the full and sole Authority of Discipline, over all his Parishioners. The Person he censures can't appeal from his Judgment, but may refer the Matter to the Bishop, by *Way of Complaint* against his Minister; and so be relieved when Time will give Leave to obtain his Lordship's Judgment.

But if this be really the Case, you must give me Leave to think, you are under the most arbitrary Government that ever obtained in the christian World; and excuse me, if I can't possibly entertain any high Opinion of your Prudence in submitting to it. This is really, what Mr. Wetmore injuriously objects to us, "to have Judges of *Affize* and *Oyer and Terminer* in every Parish"; and which I fully agree with him, in saying, "I believe few People will be fond of". p. 27. This ill-contrived and unhappy Scheme of his, will undoubtedly subject People's christian Rights and ecclesiastical Privileges to the arbitrary Disposal of a Set of "Ecclesiastical chief Judges, many of whom have not Capacity to decide a *Contraverty of thirteen pence half-penny*". And this is an Event not more likely to happen in any Church in the World, than among you: For you have no Voice in choosing your own Ministers, and the Society, as some of the Sermons they publish inform us, appoint not such Ministers as they could wish, but such as they can procure to go abroad, on the small Encouragement they are able to give. It may not be improper on this Occasion, to put you in Mind of the known Story of of the Clergyman in England, who accepted a Mission in one of the Plantations. And being advised by the Bishop to provide himself well with Cloathing, since he was going into a Country where it was dear, and particularly to carry two or three Dozen Shirts; reply'd, *Two or three Dozen Shirts!* Alas, my Lord, had I known how to procure half a Dozen, I should never have thought of going as a Missionary into America.

This Scheme of Mr. Wetmore's, I say, subjects you to the arbitrary Judgment of your Ministers; for he says the Minister is left "to determine according to his best Prudence". And

And the Right of complaining to the Bishop, will with Regard to *nine in ten* of you, signify nothing, or afford no Relief. The Bishop is a *thousand Leagues* distant; and if you send over your Complaint, his Lordship has not Leisure to examine the Complaint and Evidences himself; it must go therefore to the spiritual Court: And who of you would be at the Trouble or Expence of prosecuting your Minister in such a Court, or could expect any Success in such a Suit? Mr. *Wetmore* therefore well enough expresses it, when he says, the Minister must in this Case, submit to the Judgment of his Bishop, "*when Time will give Leave to obtain it*". And this, if you put the Matter to the Trial, will be found to mean *never*.

And, *my Brethren*, can you consent that a Stranger, or that perhaps left *Great-Britain* or *Ireland* for want of Brethren, should be intrusted with the *sole Right* of admitting to and excluding from the sacred Privileges of Christ's visible Kingdom? Are you willing to be looked upon and treated either as *Christians*, or as *Heathen Men and Publicans*, according to the arbitrary Judgment of such a Person?

This Tyranny, for such it truly is, we have the best Security against in our Communion; in which the Minister can censure no one Person, without the Consent of the Brethren in the same Church. Thus the Man is treated like an *Englishman* and a *Christian*, he is always tried by his Peers, and if he has Wrong done him, may speedily and easily obtain a Re-hearing of his Cause before an *ecclesiastical Council*. And certainly he will never recommend his Prudence to the impartial World, who, under the Notion of Expediency, forsakes a Church wherein he enjoyed such *invaluable* Privileges, and embraces a Communion which subjects him to so arbitrary and intolerable a Discipline as this.

IV. Conforming to the Church of *England* tends to bring the Plantations into an *unnecessary and hurtful State of Dependence*.

These

These Plantations are, and of Right ought to be, dependent on the Kingdom of *Great-Britain* in all their *civil* Concerns. And whatever the Enemies of the Plantations may report at Home, of the Danger of their casting off their Dependence, I believe it may with Truth be affirmed, that there is not a Man of Sense in them all, but what is willing, nay, would chuse to continue in this State. To be sure, the Advantages we derive from it, are more than sufficient to render it eligible to us. But an ecclesiastical Dependence is *unnecessary*, 'tis what I have already shewn, neither God nor Man requires of us. And it will be altogether *useless* to us; for we shall derive no Advantages from it in Point of Protection, civil Privileges, or Trade. But who will engage that it shall not prove very *hurtful*?

There are many disadvantrageous Consequences justly to be apprehended in this Case. I will name one: The Constitution of the Church of *England* allows of *Pluralities* and *Non-residence*. By this is meant, that a Minister may have two or three Parishes at once, and receive the Incomes of them all, how large soever they are, without living in them, or discharging the Duty of a Minister to them in his own Person. He need only hire some Person to do this as his *Curate*; which he can do perhaps for a Quarter of what the Parishioners are obliged to pay him. Bishop *Burnet* styles this "a Corruption of so crying and scandalous a Nature, that where-
" ever it is practised, it is sufficient to possess the People
" with great Prejudices against the Church that is guilty of
" it" †. And again, speaking of the Ordination of Ministers, he says, " They plight their Faith to God for the Care
" of Souls to be managed by them in Person, and upon that
" they will find the pastoral Care to be a Load indeed;
" and so will neither desert their Flocks, nor hire them out
" to weak, and perhaps scandalous Mercenaries. In which
" the Faultiness of some hath brought a Blemish on this

† *Abridgment*, Vol. 2. p. 22.

“ Church, and given Scandal to many” †. But tho’ this pious Bishop, and others of the best Men in the Church of *England*, have exclaimed against this as a *scandalous Corruption*, and what brings a *Blemish on the Church*; it is still retained, and like to continue, too many of the Churchmen thinking, with Mr. *Wetmore*, that all Desires and Endeavours to reform the Church, deserve only to be *banter’d*, under the Notion of “ *opening refining Shops*”. And since this Abuse is openly tolerated, we have just Reason to fear, that should we generally embrace that Communion, and have it established among us, some at least of the richest Livings in the Country, would be given to Clergymen in *England*, who instead of coming over hither, would send some sorry Curates to supply their Places; or, as the Bishop expresses it, would *hire us out to weak, and perhaps scandalous Mercenaries*. As this would be consistent with the Constitution and Laws of the Church of *England*, we can have no Security against being treated in this Form. And perhaps it would be said, that this was a proper Method of repaying the Clergy in *England* what they had expended in introducing and settling the Church among us. And would you like it, *my Brethren*, to have a good Parish in this Country looked on like a good Place in the Customs, or any other Branch of the civil Revenue; and consequently bestowed upon the Person who could make most Friends to obtain it, and who sought it with no other Design than to *appoint a Deputy* to do the Business, and put the Profits into his own Pocket? But

V. The *ill Effects* of Conformity to the Church of *England* upon *practical Religion*, are the *strongest* Reasons against the *Expedience* of our embracing that Communion.

I have been, and yet am at a Loss, whether I ought to place this under the Head of *Inexpedience* or *Unlawfulness*. I

† Ibid. p. 112.

place it *here* because I would not force Things, by laying greater Stress upon them than they will fairly bear. And as I suppose this will infer the *very highest Degree* of Inexpedience ; so I hope you will remember there is but a very small Difference between Things in the highest Degree inexpedient and Things absolutely sinful.

This Argument against you was insisted on, in my *Sermon*, and I suppose no one Thing in it has been more severely represented. Mr. *Wetmore* has spent some Pages in attempting to confute it, and has not forgot to intersperse them with *harsh* and *injurious* Reflections on me. I look upon these as *sure Indications* that the Argument pinched him pretty hard, for Men, tho' something unhappy in their Tempers, don't use to be so angry when they are not hurt. This is all the Answer he is to expect to those Things, so far as they are *personal*, but so far as they have any Appearance of Argument, I shall endeavour to give them their due Consideration.

The Question then is, Whether forsaking our Churches and conforming to Episcopacy, is a proper Means to promote *practical Religion* in the Country ? or, on the contrary, will probably, in the Issue, prove prejudicial to it ? And by *practical Religion*, I mean Conformity of Heart to the moral Perfections of God, evidenced by a strict and conscientious Observation of the divine Laws. This is truly an important Question, and deserves your serious Consideration. Religion is designed to recover Men from the sad Effects of their Apostacy from God, to make them holy, humble, meek and loving in the Temper of their Minds, devout Worshippers of God, and really good Men ; exactly just, and extensively charitable in their Dealings with all Men ; and sober, chaste and temperate in their whole Conduct ; useful Members of human Society at present, and meet for angelic and divine Society in the World to come. So far as it produces these Effects it is plainly advantageous to Men. But, on the contrary, if the *Light that is in them be Darkness*, How great is that *Darkness* ? If that which they call Religion makes them worse, more vicious in their Temper and Conduct ; what-

ever *lofty Epithets* they may bestow upon the Religion they profess, 'tis plain that it had, on the Whole, been better for them to have been without it.

The christian Religion is wisely and excellently suited to answer it's great Intentions in the Hearts and Lives of Men. And when it does not produce these Effects, and especially when it produces the contrary, there is Reason to suspect that it is very much corrupted. The famous *Apologists* for Christianity in it's early Days, insist much on this Argument in it's Favour, that it reformed Men; that those who were *vicious* before they embraced it, became *virtuous* afterward; and that Christians were really *better Men* than those of any other Religion. And I don't remember that *Celsus*, *Porphry* or even *Julian* ever told them in Reply, that their saying so proceeded from "that *Bigotry and Self-Admiration, which the Zealots among every Sort of enthusiastic Sectaries, are remarkably ting'd with*"; or that it was the Effect of a "rash censorious Temper against those whom they disapproved"; nor accused them of "Pharisee-like pleasing themselves with Comparisons between their own Sect and all others; overlooking their own Hypocrisy and detestable Vices, and passing severe Censures upon other's Faults". Or if any of them did make such Replies, there was just as much Sense and Argument in them, as there is in Mr. *Welmores*'s saying all this to me. p. 31.

We have no *infallible* Rule whereby to judge of such future Things, as do not depend on a certain and known Connection between Causes and Effects; which is perhaps the Case in every thing of a moral Nature. There are, however, Ways of forming a *rational Judgment* in these Cases; and this may be so well founded as to be a proper and justifiable Rule of Action, to a reasonable Creature accountable for his Conduct. It may amount to a *moral Certainty*, and we shall be inexcusable, in the Sight of God and Man, if we do not act upon it; much more, if we act in Opposition to it. The *best Way* of judging with Regard to future Events, is to look back and enquire what Effects such and such Causes have

have already produced. And if we find *such Events* have commonly appeared upon *such Things* being done, we conclude there is the Relation of Cause and Effect between them, tho' we can't always see the Connection. And hence we *rationaly* judge, that if such Actions be now or hereafter done, such Effects will follow; unless we can discern something *special* in the Case, that probably will prevent it.

This is the Way of judging I use, and would perswade you to use in deciding the Question now before us. Would you you form a rational Judgment, what Effect adhering to the Doctrines, Discipline and Worship of our Churches will have on practical Religion, look back and see what the Effect has formerly been; or would you judge what will be the Consequence of a general Conformity to the Church of *England*; look abroad in the World, and consider the State of practical Religion in those Places that have for a long Time been wholly, or chiefly of that Profession. Mr. *Wetmore* seems very much at a Loss what Reply to make on this Head, and attempts rather to *evade* than to *answer* the Argument. At first, he endeavours to *disgrace* it, by representing it as a Piece of *Pharisaical Ostentation*. Then, he would *prejudice* his Readers against it, by saying, that it has been the common Pretence of every new Sect, from the Days of the *Brownists* down to the latest *New-Light Exhorters*. In the next Place, he proposes some *Difficulties* in the Way, and would represent it *impracticable* to make a fair Comparison in the Case; he asks "*Who shall hold the Ballance*?" and says, of making a Comparison, "*if it could well be done*". And yet, *after all*, he pretends the Argument is really in his Favour. But why all this *Shuffling* and *Evasion*? If there be nothing at all in the Argument, why did not he plainly tell you, that it was a Matter of Indifference whether you chose a Religion that would make you better, or one that would make you worse? Why should any Person be prejudiced against an Argument, because Men have pretended to justify themselves by it, who had no Right to it, and against whom it concluded with it's full Force? But who will believe that Mr. *Wetmore* thought this

this Argument really in his Favour, when he has taken so much Pains to disgrace it, and prejudice his Readers against it? This affords the *strongest Presumption* that he was conscious, that, on a fair Comparison, the Advantage would be clearly on our Side.

I am at no Difficulty in answering that Question, "*Who shall hold the Ballance*"? Were I actuated by a *Party Spirit*, disputing merely for Victory, or resolving to maintain my Cause right or wrong, I should, no Doubt, chuse to refer it to such Judges as I thought favourable to it; be sure I should not be so impolitic, as to chuse the known Adversaries of my Cause to decide it. But as this is not the Case with me, I willingly and *of Choice* refer the Matter to your own Consciences. You, *my Brethren*, shall be Judges in this whole Controversy between us. And 'tis for this Reason that I chuse to write in the Form of an *Address to you*. Consider the Matter impartially, exercise a proper Concern for the temporal and eternal Interests of yourselves and your Posterity, and then seriously put this Question to yourselves, are you really willing that NEW-ENGLAND should become, in Point of Religion, a BARBADOS or a JAMAICA, and let Conscience give the decisive Answer.

This Comparison is easily made, for there are few of our Towns but what have some Persons worthy of Credit, who have been in the *West-India* Islands, of whom you may enquire concerning the Profession and Practice of Religion that are to be found there. And the Comparison is unexceptionably fair. These *Islands* have for a long Time had the Church of *England* settled in them. *Barbados* in particular, is wholly laid out into Parishes; has Churches built, and Ministers officiating in them. And they are both, I think wholly (to be sure chiefly) Episcopal. This Country, on the contrary, has been wholly *Antiepiscopal*, and at this Day the *Episcoparians* bear an inconsiderable Proportion to the Body of the People. Mr. *Wetmore* thinks, "*a Comparison to*
"*decide this Controversy, would much more properly be made be-*
"*tween the State of Religion and Virtue in the whole Nation of*
" England,

“ England, before any of these refining Sects open’d their refining Shops in the Kingdom ; and the State of Religion and Virtue at present ; and as it has been gradually improving to better or worse ever since”. p. 32. Mr. Wetmore knew that such a Comparison was impracticable, and would decide nothing. The Church of England, which is one of the Parties in the Comparison proposed to be made, was established by Queen ELIZBETH’s *Act of Uniformity*, which had the Royal Assent June 24. 1559.* But the Settlement of it was not properly compleated till the Convocation agreed to it, in 1563. Now if by “ refining Sects”, Mr. Wetmore means the old Puritans, they were in the Church from the Beginning, and were so numerous in this Convocation, that (as I have before proved) they had almost carried the Vote in the Lower House. But if by “ opening their refining Shops”, he intends actually separating from the Church, he will get but little by this ; for the best Historians date the Separation, 1566†. There was therefore only three Years, at most but seven, from the Settlement of the Church, to the Rise of the Separation ; and this is vastly too short a Space for making suitable Observations, in order to the drawing the Comparison proposed. His proposing such an impracticable Comparison as this, could have no other Design than to divert you from that just and easy one I had stated. What now becomes of “ the Monuments of Virtue, Piety and practical Godliness” of these Times, “ remaining to this Day”. The Instances he names, p. 33. and which he says your “ despising Neighbours can’t pretend to vie with”, were either erected before the Reformation, in the Days of Popery ; or have sprung up since the Separation. and I don’t believe he can produce an Instance of so much as the building a single Parish Church, in that short Period, in which the Church of England sat alone, and had no Rival to stir her up to Emulation.

* Salmon’s Chronol. † Neal, Vol. i. p. 230.

Mr. *Wetmore* may flout as much as he pleases, at “*the self-admiring Saints of New-England*”, and gently touch the *abominable Vices* that abound in the *West-Indies*; and if these Things afford him any Satisfaction in his sober and retired Hours, I shall not endeavour to deprive him of it. But after all he has said to make the Difference, in Point of practical Religion, appear small and inconsiderable; I am confident, *my Brethren*, that there is not a sober Man among you, but that, when dying, would much rather leave a Family of young Children to be educated among us, than in any one of those Islands.

As to what he says, p. 34. of “*the late scandalous Efforts of satanic Zeal*”, and “*the Obstructions and Checks they met with from the Church of England Congregations*”; I reply, that the Errors and Disorders he refers to, did very much arise from the Church of *England*, and were an *unhappy Imitation* of the Conduct of it's Clergy. The *Arminianism* which they had spread in the Country did as naturally beget the late *Antinomian* Errors, as one Extreme produces another. The first *Itinerants* I ever knew were *Missionaries* from the *Society for propagating the Gospel*. The Doctrine that our Ministers and Churches are neither Ministers nor Churches of Christ, and that therefore it was lawful and necessary for Christians to renounce and separate from them, was first preached by the Clergy of the Church of *England*; and from them the late and present *Seducers* learnt the Art of *fishing in troubled Waters*, visiting such Places as were in Contention, and heading every Party that sat themselves up in Opposition to the Minister or Church they belonged to. I wish these Gentlemen had opposed the late Errors as some others did, not by insisting on the contrary Errors, but by duly explaining the great Truths of the Gospel, which these irregular Persons either mistook or abused. But as they have managed the Matter, I fear Religion is thrown into a *chronical Disease* by their Method of curing it of an *acute one*; as an unskillful Physician, to cure his Patient of a *Pleurisy*, sometimes takes away so much of his Blood and Spirits; as brings

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on an *incurable Consumption*. Upon the Whole, I am of the Opinion, that had there been no *Episcopal Congregations* among us, the late Disorders would either never have arisen, or been carried off in a much better Manner.

There is but one Thing more to be considered under this Head. Mr. *Wetmore*, tho' he can't deny the Fact, that *practical Religion* decays among us since the Church of *England* has been introduced; will have it that I mistake the Cause. p. 33. "If Mr. Hobart (*says he*) had well understood the true Cause and Springs from which the Immorality, Atheism and Profaneness of the present Age is derived, he could never have imputed it to any Defects in the Constitution of the Church of England". In Answer to this I will not insist on the Want of Discipline in that Church, tho' I look upon it as one of the principal Causes of these Things, because I shall have Occasion to consider this more at large, under the last general Head. I will therefore at present only observe, That the not altering the publick Forms in the Liturgy, according to the Changes that happen in the Circumstances and Customs of Mankind, appears to me as one great Cause of the *Irreligion* that prevails in the Nation. I shall illustrate this Remark by giving an Instance or two of it.

When the *Church Catechism* was composed, all Children had *God-Fathers* and *God-Mothers*; private Baptisms were not practised unless in Cases of apparent Danger, and if the Child recovered, he was brought forth afterwards, and had *Sponsors* to answer for him. But the Case is now very different, and especially in this Country. Many of the Children catechized at Church, were baptized among us; many more were *privately* baptized, the Parents chusing this from a Scruple concerning the Sign of the Cross in Baptism. It has been a common Practice among you, to teach such Children the Church Catechism; and you have no other Form of Instruction for them. To use this Form is to teach such Children direct Falsities in plain Matters of Fact, as a Part of religious Education. And surely that must be the direct Way to make them profane and irreligious. This I mentioned in

my *Sermon*, in Answer to which Mr. *Wetmore* is so far from vindicating your Conduct, that he does not pretend either to deny or justify the Fact: But implicitly gives up the Cause; for he says, p. 41. "*It might be more proper to begin with the Creed, or else to ask, --- What Answer do the Children of the Church give, when asked who gave you that Name?*" Who would have tho't that Mr. *Wetmore* should be the Man to "*open a refining Shop*" to melt down and new Coin the public Formula's of the Church? Or how came he by Authority to alter any Part of the established Liturgy?

The Church of *England*, by her 59th CANON, requires all her Ministers "*on every Sunday and Holiday before Evening Prayer, for Half an Hoar or more, to examine and instruct the Youth and ignorant Persons of his Parish, in the ten Commandments, the Articles of the Belief, and the Lord's Prayer; and diligently to hear, instruct and teach them in the Catechism set forth in the Book of Common Prayer*". I don't see but the Minister is obliged to keep to the *Form* in *Catechising* as much as in *Praying*: And changing or omitting any Part seems, as little allowed in one Case as in the other. The Penalty for the Minister's neglecting *thus to catechize*, on the third Conviction, is *Excommunication*. And "*Fathers, Mothers, Masters or Mistresses neglecting their Duties*" in not sending "*their Children, Servants or Apprentices*" to be thus catechized, are to be suspended, and if they persist herein by the Space of a Month, to be excommunicated. Notwithstanding therefore the Church of *England* has been so often boasted of as the *most perfect and best constituted Church*; I think it plain, that if her Constitution be received by us, without considerable Amendments, we shall find ourselves obliged, under Pain of Excommunication, to such Things as are *unlawful* in themselves, and in their Consequences *destructive to the Morals* of our Posterity.

If Mr. *Wetmore* could produce Authority for mending the Form of catechising, which, as appears from the Canon cited, is a Part of the publick Service of the Church, to be used upon all Sundays and Holidays; yet the Amendments he proposes would

would not answer. To "*begin with the Creed*" would not do ; because there is Mention of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* in the Catechism, as well *after* the Creed as *before* it. To change the Question, and ask, "*What Answer do the Children of the Church give, when asked, who gave you that Name*"? would be very improper in the Case of such Children as have received the Baptism of the Church in Private ; for since the Church declares these "*lawfully and sufficiently baptized*", I hope Mr. *Wetmore* would not have them look upon themselves "*but in the Order of Catechumens*". And indeed this Way of proposing the Questions to any Children is ridiculous. Should the Bishop, when he comes to *confirm* one of these Children, very gravely ask him that important Question, *What does a Child of the Church answer, when asked, who gave you that Name* ? If his Lordship could keep his own Countenance, I very much doubt whether the Sight of a Pair of *Lawn Sleeves* would keep the Children from laughing in his Face. Mr. *Wetmore* proposes this great Advantage from asking the Question in this Form, "*Such Children would be thus put in Mind, that something more is done by Baptism in the Church, than is pretended in the Meetings*", and adds, "*I can esteem such Children but in the Order of Catechumens, until they make the Stipulations themselves at Confirmation or at the Eucharist*". p. 41. Many of your Ministers (and I suppose Mr. *Wetmore* himself) have taught such Children the church Catechism without changing the Questions into this Form. The Child therefore has been solemnly taught, that in *Baptism* (which he received in one of our Churches) he "*was made a Member of Christ, the Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven*" †. This has been inculcated on the Child as a *Part of his Religion* ; and yet Mr. *Wetmore* now declares that he esteems that very Child "*but in the Order of Catechumens*", that is, an *unbaptized Person*. Can you wonder now, if a Child instructed thus should turn

† Church Catechism, Anf. 2.

Deist or Atheist? Mr. Wetmore himself was baptized in one of our Churches, and so, according to his own Principles, was made not a *Christian* but a *Catechumen*. Now I would gladly be informed, how he ever came to be a *Christian*, (I mean externally, or *Foro Ecclesiae*) and why he is not even yet to be looked upon as in the *Order of Catechumens*. I have been informed that he never received *Confirmation*, and his receiving the *Eucharist* cannot supply the Want of Baptism. I would enquire of him, Whether an Heathen's receiving the *Communion* would initiate him into the Gospel Church, and entitle him to the Privileges of it, tho' it was known that he had never been baptized? And if he allows it, I wish he would inform me, Why Baptism is ever administered to an adult Person?

The other Instance I shall produce to shew, that the not altering public Forms, so as to accommodate them to the Circumstances and prevailing Customs of the World, tends to introduce Irreligion and Prophaneness; shall be taken from the Office of *Matrimony*. When this Office was composed, it was the general (I suppose the universal) Practice of the Nation, to marry upon the Foot of the common Law of *England*, which gives the Wife a Right of *Dower* in her Husband's Estate. It was therefore well enough for the Man to say, "*with all my Worldly Goods I thee endow*", for he really meant as he said. The Customs of the Nation are so very much alter'd since that Time, that perhaps there is not now one Marriage in ten, among People of Fashion and Estate, without a *Jointure*, that is, some Certainty settled up the Woman instead of the *Right of Dower*. Thus a Man and Woman agree before Marriage, that in Case she outlives him, she shall have a certain Sum of Money, or the Rents of such an Estate during her natural Life, in *Consideration of which she quits the Right of Dower*, which the Law would otherwise give her. But tho' the Practice is thus changed, the Form of *Matrimony* is not changed. And therefore when a Man and Woman have solemnly agreed under Hand and Seal, that she shall not be endowed, or have any Right of *Dower* in his

Episcopal Separation in New-England.

77

his Estate, they go into the Church, and the Man, taught by the Priest, says to the Woman,----“ *With all my worldly Goods I thee endow, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*”. Thus is the sacred Name of God taken in vain in a great Part of the Marriages in England.

The Case is still worse in many Instances in this Country, where there are frequently Marriages contracted between Slaves. I have been informed that some of your Ministers use this Form in such Marriages, and the Laws of the Church of England do, I think, evidently oblige them to it, CAN. 62. “No Minister upon Pain of Suspension, *per Triumium ipso Facto*, shall celebrate Matrimony between any Persons without a Faculty or License---except the Banns of Matrimony have been first published three several Sundays, &c. Neither shall any Minister, upon the like Pain, under any Pretence whatsoever, join any Persons---in Marriage---but only between the Hours of Eight and Twelve in the Forenoon, nor in any private Place, but either in the Church or Chapel where one of them dwelleth, and like-wise in Time of divine Service”. Thus Marriage is, according to the Canon, to be celebrated in the Church, in Time of divine Service; and I think it is allowed on all Hands, that the Subscription required by the 36th CANON, obliges to the Use of the Forms in the Common Prayer Book, in all public Administrations in the Church. But now if one of your Ministers, joining a couple of Negro Slaves in Marriage, shall teach the Man to say to the Woman, “ *With all my worldly Goods I thee endow, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*”; when he and all present know, that neither of them have, or are capable of having Property in any thing whatever; the looser Part of the Auditory would probably look upon it as a solemn Farce, and be hardened in Impiety and Prophaneness by it; while all who have a proper Reverence for that sacred Name in which they were baptized, must find Grief and Horror arising in their Minds on hearing it thus abused even in the Time and Place of divine Service,

Service, and so exposed to the Contempt and Ridicule of the profane Part of Mankind. I hope this Specimen may convince Mr. Wetmore that the Immorality, Atheism and Profaneness of the present Age is in some Measure owing to Defects in the Church of England, and therefore shall wholly omit many other Instances which might easily be produced under this Head.

And now I suppose the *second Question* sufficiently answered; for if the Church of England requires so vast a Charge to support it; exercises such an arbitrary Power over those who submit to it, in the important Articles of appointing and removing Ministers; subjects them to so tyrannical a Discipline; tends to bring these Plantations into an unnecessary and hurtful State of ecclesiastical Dependence; and if our conforming to it will, in all human Probability, issue in the Destruction of practical Religion; and the Introduction of Irreligion and Profaneness of every Kind; surely no reasonable Man will pretend that it is prudent for us to conform to that Church; or that you have acted a wise and reasonable Part in deserting our Churches and going over to that Communion. And having proved these Things, I suppose I may very justly and pertinently repeat my former Expostulation, “Can you answer it to God or your own Consciences, to the present Age, or to Posterity, if you should be instrumental in destroying an ecclesiastical Constitution so exactly agreeable to the Gospel, and which has been so signally owned and blessed for promoting Religion in the Power and Practice of it: And in introducing instead of it, so defective a Constitution, and which will, almost certainly, bring with it, an Inundation of Vice and Looseness, and issue in the Destruction of practical Religion? Is it, my Brethren, a Matter of Indifference with you, whether your Children prove like the former Generations in New England; who were so remarkable for serious Religion and practical Godliness; or run into that Carelessness and Looseness, that open Irreligion and undisguised Profaneness, which are so dreadfully visible where the Church of England has

" has the Ascendant, and especially where People are so unhappy
" as to have no other religious Profession? But I pass to

THE THIRD QUESTION.

Whether it be **LAWFUL** for particular Members of *New-English Churches*, to separate from them, and join in Communion with the *Episcopal Assemblies* in the Country?

By *Members of the New-English Churches*, I mean, not only actual Communicants, but all that have been born and bred, baptized and educated in them. These all are in some Sense, tho' not in the highest Sense, Members of these Churches. And concerning all these I make no Scruple to assert, that it is *unlawful*, or really sinful for them to separate from the Churches of which they are thus Members, and join in Communion with the *Episcopal Congregations* in the Country. And the higher Profession any particular Person has made, or the more express and particular his Engagements to our Churches have been, the more aggravated is his Sin in forsaking them. The Reasons which convince me, and which I think ought to convince you, *my Brethren*, of this, are such as these:

I. The *State of the ministerial Office*, in the Church of *England*, and particularly the *sinful Subjection* of the *Episcopal Ministers* in *America*, to the *English Prelates*, renders it unlawful for us to go over to that Communion.

It is a Matter of no small Consequence to the *christian Church*, that the ministerial Office in it, be kept in the same State, and on the same Footing as Christ left it; and all Changes and Innovations in it must be of dangerous Tendency. He that has just Sentiments of the Wisdom and Goodness of God our Saviour, will suppose that his Institutions don't need our Amendments; And he that has a proper Sense
of

of the entire Dependence of Gospel Administrations on the Blessing of Christ, will think he acts the safest Part, and is most likely to obtain Success, when he strictly adheres to Christ's own Orders and Appointments.

I endeavour'd in my late *Sermon*, briefly to represent the State of the Ministry as described in the *New Testament*, and to shew the Opposition between this and the State of it in the Church of *England*, and among you at this Day. Mr. *Wetmore* has undertaken your Defence, and taken a pretty deal of Pains to prove me mistaken in my Notions of this Matter. There are *three* Things he objects against in this Affair, *viz.* The *Equality* of Gospel Ministers,---My Account of the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*,---and my representing the Priests of the Church of *England* as *preaching*, not by Virtue of their Ordination, but by *Virtue of the Bishop's License*. 'Tis therefore my Business to defend what I have offered on these Heads.

The *first* Question between us under this Head is, Whether Christ or his Apostles instituted a proper and *standing Prelacy* in the Church; or appointed *different Orders* in the Ministry, vested with *essentially* different Powers and Authorities, to be continued in the Gospel Church? Now after all the Labour Mr. *Wetmore* has been at to convince me of this, I can by no Means assent to it, and that for these Reasons.

(1) It appears plain to me, that all Christ left in Commission as Officers in the Gospel Church, at the Time of his Ascension into Heaven, were equal in Office and Power. The Disputants on your Side use sometimes to insist, that the *seventy* Disciples were left in Commission by Christ as Officers in the Gospel Church. And Mr. *Wetmore*, in some of his former Writings, appears to have been of this Opinion. But I find he is grown older and wiser; for as I referred him to the *Sober Remarks* for a full and solid Confutation of this, and he now makes no Mention of the *Seventy*, I look upon him as giving up the Argument drawn from them. There

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was therefore but ONE COMMISSION, that recorded *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20. left by Christ in the Gospel Church, when he ascended into Heaven. And therefore there were only the *eleven Apostles*, to whom this Commission was immediately given, that could at that Time be looked upon as Officers in the Gospel Church. And these were equal in every Instance of Office, Power or Authority. Mr. *Wetmore* don't care to allow, that Equality of Power can be argued from the Identity of the Commission; and I have no Occasion to dispute this with him, since he grants all I now insist on; *viz.* That it did in Fact make the *eleven Apostles* equal. His Words are these, (*p.* 13.) "With Respect to the Apostles "who were immediately authorized to gather and govern "the Church by this Commission, it seems to make them E- "quals in that Power: Certainly it does not subject some unto "any one of their Number". Now if Christ left only this Commission in his Church when he ascended into Heaven, and this Commission was of such a Nature as to make all to whom it was immediately given, that is, all who then were Officers in the Church, equal in Power, and not some subject to others; it must, I think, undeniably follow, that at this remarkable Period of Christ's Ascension, there was the most exact Parity among Gospel Ministers, and no Subordination of one to another: And consequently, Prelacy was not instituted by Christ himself. I go on to assert,

(2). The Apostles did not institute any other standing Order in the Gospel Ministry, properly so called, either superior or inferior, to those whom Christ himself had thus left in Commission. Mr. *Wetmore* here attempts to prove, That the Apostles might, consistently with the Commission they received from Christ, appoint a *Disparity* in the Gospel Ministry, and that in Fact they did so. Let us examine his Reasonings on these Points.

He will have it, in the first Place, that tho' Christ's Commission did not make an Inequality among the Apostles, yet it was large enough to authorize them to make one among themselves,

themselves, or at least, that it was no Way inconsistent with their Commission for them to do this. This he argues largely, p. 13, 14, 15. To all which I reply,

If by Power to make an Inequality among themselves, he meant no more than that they might, for Order sake, choose a Prolocutor, or Moderator, or (if he like the Term better) a President, any Thing consistent with his being only *Primus inter Pares*, or the first Man among Equals; I know no Body that disputes it, and he knows we allow and practise it. But if he means a proper *Difference of Order*, if he would have this President an Officer of an Order distinct from and superior to those among whom he presides, and vested with Powers and Authorities essentially different from their's; which must be his Meaning, if he would say anything to his Purpose, or lay any Foundation for the Prelacy established in the Church of *England*: In this Case I would enquire, Whether these Powers which thus dignify and distinguish this President, are contained in the *original Commission* given to the whole Number, or not. I suppose it will be said that they are contained in it: Because otherwise the President will have his Commission to seek, and it will be found that they who set him up have pretended to give him an Authority which they themselves never had. And if this dignified President has no Kind or Degree of Authority but what is contained in the Commission, how comes he by Powers which the Rest have not; since the Commission it self, which contains all his Powers was given equally to them all? There is but *one Way* in which this can be effected, and that is, by supposing each of the others to have *less Authority* than they had before the President was chosen; for if he can't have more Power than the Commission gives, they must have less, or else they will still remain in their *primitive State of Equality*. But this latter Supposition is as absurd as the former; for the Powers granted to any Person, or to any Number of Persons by Commission, are their's to use, and not to give away. And had the *eleven Apostles* acted in this Form, and set up *Peter*, for Instance, as their President, with Powers essentially

essentially different from the Rest; 'tis very plain that the other ten had degraded themselves from the Office in which Christ placed them, and consequently had incapacitated themselves for the Service he required and expected from them. And I hope Mr. Wetmore can see that this would have been inconsistent with their Duty to him.

Our Author goes on to consider the Matter "with Respect to other Officers or Ministers in the Church, to whom this Commission was not immediately given by Christ", as he expresses it, p. 15. And he asks, "Can Equality among such with any Propriety be argued from this Commission"? Now if by "Officers to whom this Commission was not immediately given", he intends only different Persons admitted into the same Office as Colleagues or Successors to these first Officers (which by his Use of the Word *immediately* here and in p. 13. seems to be his Meaning) I answer, No Doubt Equality among such may, with the *strictest Propriety*, be argued from the Commission. It would be strange indeed, if the Commission made those to whom it was *immediately* given equal, as he owns it did, and those to whom it was *mediately* given not equal. But perhaps by "other Officers or Ministers of the Church", the Gentleman means Officers of a different Order from those to whom this Commission was immediately given; and if so, it would have been exceeding proper for him to have proved that there were any such in the Apostles Days, before he enquired whether they were equal or unequal to one another. This he well knew I utterly denied, and therefore all his Discourse of "every Order and Degree of Ministry---how different soever in Power---being virtuated by this Commission", p. 15, 16. is merely begging the Question, for the very Thing in Debate is taken for granted and argued from.

Nothing is, or can be *virtuated*, by the Commission any Person acts under, but what that Commission authorizes him to act. And I believe Mr. Wetmore is the first Man that ever supposed a Commission authorised a Man to do every thing it does not expressly forbid; or, which amounts to the same

same Thing, argued that a Man, acting by Virtue of a Commission, might do a certain Act because "*no Clause in the Commission would have been contravened thereby*", or because he could "*see no Clause forbidding*" it. p. 13. There is no Clause in the Commission of a *Justice of the Peace*, expressly forbidding him to try and execute a Man for High Treason, and yet it would be Murder in him to do it.

Mr. *Wetmore* perhaps will think this Instance not parallel, because he says, p. 13. "*Much was left to their [the Apostles] Wisdom and Prudence, especially under the Guidance of Inspiration*". The latter Clause in this Sentence, whatever might be intended by it, can I think serve no other Purpose but to embarrass the Matter, and mislead the inattentive Reader. For it plainly confounds two entirely distinct Capacities, in which the Apostles acted; and which must carefully be distinguished by all that would form clear Apprehensions of their Characters and of the Grounds on which they acted. 'Tis one Question, What the Apostles might do, as persons acting under the ordinary and standing Commission Christ has given to the Gospel Ministry; and another, and a quite different Question, what they might do, as Persons extraordinarily directed and inspired by the Holy Spirit. In the former Capacity they could act nothing but what a Person vested with the same Commission, may at this Day act, at least in like Circumstances: But in the latter Capacity they might regularly do any Thing the Holy Spirit excited and directed them to.

This Distinction is very plain and obvious, and 'tis what Christ himself pointed out to his Apostles. For after he had given them the *standing Commission*, which made them properly Officers in his Kingdom, and in which only they were to have Successors; he said to them, (Luke xxiv. 49.) *And behold I send the Promise of my Father upon you: But tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with Power from on High.* This *Power from on High* thus distinguished from the *Power of Office* which they already had by Virtue of their Commission, evidently means the immediate Inspiration and miracu-

lous Influences of the Holy Ghost. The Writers on this Controversy commonly make this Distinction in the Terms of the *ordinary* and *extraordinary* Powers of the Apostles; meaning by the *former* what are contained in the Commission, and so are common to all to whom the Commission itself belongs; that is, to the Apostles and their Successors in the Gospel Ministry: And by the *latter*, those that arose from immediate Inspiration, and so were peculiar to the Apostles, or such wherein they had no Successors. Mr. Wetmore is too well acquainted with the Controversy to be thought ignorant of this Distinction so commonly made, nor could he be insensible that in my *Sermon* I steadily considered the Apostles in their *ordinary Character*, or as acting merely by virtue of that Commission, which Christ gave with an express Design that it should remain in Force, and be executed to the End of the World. As therefore he is *inaccurate* in confounding these so greatly different Capacities, so he is *disingenuous* when he represents me as saying, that "Marcus, Demas, &c. were equal (for he means in all Respects equal) to St. Paul, and the rest of the Apostles", p. 18. When he declares, as p. 10. "I believe Mr Hobart is the first Man that ever thought of making Demas an Apostle of equal Authority with St. Paul". And again, p. 18. "I can't believe that Mr. Hobart himself, or any other Person of tolerable Sense, will deny (upon cool Reflection) the Imparity in Office and Power, that subsisted between the Apostles and other Ministers". A generous Adversary would not have been guilty of so low an Artifice as this. For while he would thus, to prejudice you against me; represent me as saying what no Body ever dreamt of before, he knew there was nothing at all in it. He well knew I never pretended to make any *ordinary Minister* of the Gospel, equal to an Apostle, considered in his *extraordinary Capacity*; and he knew likewise, that to make them equal in their *ordinary Character*, or consider'd merely as commissioned Officers in Christ's Kingdom, was nothing peculiar to me, but what is commonly done by the Writers on our Side of the Question. And if this plain and easy Distinction be kept in Mind,

Mind, the Argument for Equality among Gospel Ministers, drawn from the Commission Christ gave them, remains in it's full Force, and is not in any Degree weakened by all Mr. *Wetmore* has offered against it. His having Recourse in this Case to what the Apostles might do, "*under the Guidance of Inspiration*", is a tacit Confession, that they could not erect the Prelacy he pleads for, *merely by Virtue of their Commission*; and the Reason of this must be, because the Commission did not give them Authority to do it. Thus far then I think we may go on sure Ground, There was at first a *perfect Parity* or Equality among Gospel Ministers; and no one of them was of an higher Order, or vested with greater Authority than the Rest. For Mr. *Wetmore* allows, that the Commission itself "*seems to make them Equals*"; and I have proved that it did not give them Authority to introduce an Inequality of Order among themselves.

We are next to enquire, Whether the Apostles, *under the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost*, did in Fact institute any other or different Order in the Gospel Ministry, properly so called. For tho' they could not do this, considered as *acting under the Commission* we have been disputing about, because that gave them no Authority to do it, and consequently if they had done it, we must not say that the Order of Ministry thus instituted was *virtuated by this Commission*, but by *their extraordinary Authority as inspired Persons*; yet if they did it under the Influence and Direction of the Holy Spirit, we are doubtless obliged to observe such their Appointment. I argued in my Sermon against their having done this, from the Silence of the sacred Writers on this Head, in this Manner, "*We never read in the New Testament of any other Orders being erected in the Gospel-Ministry; and doubtless we should have had a particular and plain Account of it, if any other had been afterwards appointed; and not have been left to collect it from some few scattered Sentences and obscure Hints of doubtful Interpretation*". And I illustrated the Remark, by observing, how very *particular and circumstantial* an Account the inspired Historian has given us of the Appointment of Deacons,

Deacons, an Order inferior to the Ministry properly so called. In answer to which Mr. *Wetmore* tells me, p. 16. "This whole Dispute about Equality of Power among Ministers, may easily be decided, by attending to the very plain Matters of Fact recorded in the New-Testament, of different Orders and Degrees in the Ministry". I am heartily glad to hear this; for, from hence I infer, in the first Place, That we need not have Recourse to any other Records to decide it; and why then are *Ignatius* and *Tertullian* appealed to in the next Page? Mr. *Wetmore* I hope don't take their Writings for Part of the New-Testament. Again, if the whole Dispute may be easily decided, and that from very plain Records, I hope we shall have no Occasion to debate such Texts as are confessedly *Obscure*, and which, after all the learned Labour which has been expended upon them, remain doubtful and of uncertain Interpretation. And as Mr. *Wetmore* is on the affirmative Side, it plainly belongs to him to produce these very plain Records of the New-Testament, which will so easily decide this whole Debate.

He begins thus, p. 16. "That the *Deacons* were an Order inferior, not only to the Apostles, but to other Ministers then in the Church, Mr. *Hobart* allows". There is something in this Sentence I can't account for. By "other Ministers then in the Church", he must mean, Ministers of an Order inferior to the Apostles, otherwise I can't make Sense of what he says. And yet he knows that if the Apostles are considered in their ordinary Capacity, I deny that there was any Order in the Ministry inferior to them; and he even represents me as making all other Ministers equal to them in all Respects. And there is not a Word in the Page of my Sermon he quotes to justify him in this. I there say, that the *Deacons* "are an Order inferior to the Ministry, properly so called", and by the Ministry properly so called, I mean the Office Christ instituted when he said, Go ye therefore teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c. which Office I always suppose common to the Apostles and all other Ministers of the Gospel. But this is not the only Time Mr. *Wet-*

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more has quoted that from my Sermon which was never in it, his very first Quotation, p. 7. is a flagrant Instance of this Kind. Had I taken such Liberties in quoting from him, or any other Author, I make no Doubt he would have replied, "*I boldly charge him with gross Prevarication and Falshood, done with a wicked Intent*". But since Recriminations, however just, do nothing toward determining the Controversy, I chuse to suppress them.

I can by no Means allow that the Apostles appointing the Office of Deacons, proves their instituting different Orders in the Ministry properly so called; because Deacons are not, properly speaking, an Order in the Ministry, but (as I said before) an Order inferior to it. Their Office is not so much as "*virtuated*" by the only Commission given to the Gospel Ministry; for the Apostles in appointing this Office did not act by virtue of this Commission, but as Persons under the immediate Direction of the Holy Spirit. The *Serving of Tables*, which was the only Thing Deacons were originally appointed for, was no Part of the Office of a Gospel Minister, nor is there a Word relating to it in his Commission. Nay the Scripture opposes the Office to which Deacons were appointed, to the Ministry of the Word, Acts vi. 2, 3, 4. *Then the Twelve called the Multitude of the Disciples unto them, and said, it is not Reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve Tables. Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you seven Men --- whom we may appoint over this Business. But we will give ourselves continually to Prayer and to the Ministry of the Word.* Here the Word of God is opposed to the Service of Tables, and this Business, that is, the Serving of Tables is opposed to the Ministry of the Word. The proper Business of Deacons, and the only Design of their Institution, is expressed by *serving Tables*, and the peculiar Business of the Apostles is called the Ministry of the Word. And if Mr. Wetmore remembers that teaching or preaching the Gospel is the first and great Thing mentioned in the Commission he and I so often refer to, I hope he will allow that the Ministry of the Word mentioned here, is the Ministry properly so called, and what the Deacons

Deacons as such were not appointed to. Notwithstanding therefore the Instances he has produced (some of which will not bear examining) of Persons preaching and baptizing, who had *formerly been* Deacons, but now were Ministers of the Gospel; he must excuse me, if instead of admitting this as a Proof of Inequality in the Ministry, I look upon the *preaching Deacon* in the Church of England, as a mere *Lay-Exhorter*.

In the next Place Mr. *Wetmore* mentions “two Texts in the Writings of St. Paul, to put the Matter out of all Doubt, that in the first Planting of Christianity, God himself established Imparity among the Ministers whom he sent to preach the Gospel of his Son”. p. 18. The two Texts are, 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. and Eph. iv. 11. The latter of these Texts says not a Word about *Parity* or *Imparity*, which is the only Thing now under Consideration; and therefore I shall only say of it as he does, “I will leave this without a Comment”. And the former Text does rather express a *Diversity* than an *Inequality* between the Persons it refers to; and the Question is, who these Persons are. The Apostle says, *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?* &c. I enquire, *All who?* Does he mean all Ministers of the Gospel, or all Members of the Christian Church? Mr. *Wetmore* must say, *all Ministers*: But this I can’t believe, because he denies their being *Teachers*, as strongly as he does their being *Apostles*; and I apprehend that an *unpreaching Ministry*, tho’ allow’d in the Church of England, did not obtain in the Apostles Time. And as the Apostle is, in the Context, drawing a Comparison between the Church of Christ, and a natural Body, consisting of many Members, designed for and suited to different Uses and Services, all of them necessary to the Good of the whole Body; it seems most agreeable to his Design, to understand him, as I do, as speaking of the *Members of the Church* in general, and not of the *Ministers of the Gospel* in particular. And thus this Text proves no Sort of *Inequality among Gospel Ministers*.

I find nothing more in Mr. *Wetmore's Vindication*, to prove a *Disparity* among Ministers, that requires any Answer, unless perhaps what he says p. 9. about the Word *Synergoi* or *Fellow-Labourers*. This I used in my *Sermon*, rather as an Introduction to the Argument, than as a Part of it. But since he has been pleased to make some Remarks upon it, and, with his usual *Accuracy* and *Condour*, has carried the Matter so far as to make the Argument imply Blasphemy, or a making Men equal with God; I think myself obliged to make some Reply. And shall therefore say, The Instances he gives of the Use of the *English Words Fellow-Men, Fellow-Christians, &c.* make nothing against me, for the greatest Prince and the meanest Beggar, considered merely as Men, or as Christians, are equal. But what I am principally concerned in is the Use of the *Greek Word Synergoi* in that Text 1 Cor. iii. 9. which is the only Instance Mr. *Wetmore* pretends to, in which this Word can't be taken in the Sense of Equality. The Words in the *Original* stand thus, *Theou gar esmen Synergoi*, the most literal Translation of which is, *For we are God's Fellow-Labourers*; for the genitive Case *Theou* ought not to be rendred, as Mr. *Wetmore* translates it, *with God*; but *God's*, or *of God*. Should I say of myself and my Brethren in the Ministry, we are *Theou Syndouloi*, *God's Fellow-Servants*; I suppose Mr. *Wetmore* " would have tho't " *the Man very weak in his Intellectuals, who should have charged me with Blasphemy, for making myself equal with God*". And indeed this Expression, instead of representing God as one of the *Fellow-Servants*, really represents him as the common Lord and Master of them all. And thus when *Paul* and *Apollos* are stiled *God's Fellow-Labourers*, the Equality suggested in the Expression is wholly and only between *Paul* and *Apollos*; and not at all between the blessed God and either of them, which would be Blasphemy indeed. *Paul* and *Apollos* are *Fellow-Labourers*, the Relation between them is that of Equality. But God is their great LORD, their Owner and Employer. And all this the original Words plainly suggest. The Word *Theou* is three Times used in that one Verse, and

is every Time what *Grammarians* call the *genitive Case positive*, and denotes God's sovereign and absolute Property in the Thing spoken of.

I suppose my self to have fully answered all Mr. *Wetmore* has said to prove an Inequality in the Gospel Ministry, and therefore to have now a Right to conclude, that neither our Lord Jesus Christ, nor his Apostles, appointed different Orders in the standing Ministry of the Gospel; and consequently that the *Prælacy* established in the Church of *England* is repugnant to Christ's Institution, and renders the ministerial Character and Offices quite a different Thing from what it was in the Days of the Apostles. And if there be but one Order in the Ministry, Mr. *Wetmore* will, I suppose, allow, that the Power of Ordination belongs to that Order; for I have no Suspicion that he will turn Advocate for the Power of the *Laiety* in that Case. And therefore I think it wholly needless now to dispute which Order has the Power of Ordination.

The next Thing to be considered is the *Oath of canonical Obedience*, by which the Priests of the Church of *England* oblige themselves to obey their Bishops in all Things lawful and honest. This I represented as calling the Bishop Master, contrary to the Command of Christ, *Matth. xxiii. 8, 9, 10.* and argued upon it thus, "The taking an Oath of Allegiance to a Prince, is the highest Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty, the most solemn Profession of Subjection to him; or, in Christ's Language, 'tis calling him Master, and this, altho' no Person is obliged by his Allegiance to obey his Prince in any Thing but what is lawful and honest. Now who can give a Reason why taking the Oath of Allegiance to a Prince, should be esteemed calling him Master in a civil Sense, and yet taking an Oath of canonical Obedience to a Bishop not be look'd upon as calling him Master in an ecclesiastical or religious Sense? Or who will pretend that being called Master in a religious Sense, is not expressly forbidden to Gospel Ministers by their great MASTER?" Mr. *Wetmore* don't deny your Minister's taking such an Oath as I have mentioned; and he seems rather

ther disposed to quarrel at the Argument than to answer it. He enquires, *Who authorized me to be so dogmatical in putting my Construction upon those Words of our Saviour?* I answer, the Text itself. He further says, p. 25. "*A Rebuke for his Insolence is the properest Answer to be given him*". This Way of arguing is sometimes admitted among Porters, who, when they can't otherwise answer their Antagonist, tell him, *he deserves to have his Head broke for his Impudence*; but it ought never to be admitted into the Disputes of Gentlemen or Scholars, much less into those of Divines; and I can't but think Mr. Wetmore, on cool Reflection, will be ashamed of his having used it.

He goes on to say, "*If there be any Power and Authority in any Order whatsoever in the Church, to which Men ought to be subject and pay Obedience, it can be no Fault to own that Authority, and promise and engage most solemnly and faithfully to be subject to it*". I am glad to meet with anything under this Head, that has so much Appearance of Argument; and feel a Disposition in my own Mind to treat it with Tenderness, on that Account. But however, I must say, that as Mr. Wetmore undertook the Province of replying to my Sermon, he ought to have answered my Arguments, which he here has not so much as attempted. He does not deny that taking the Oath of Allegiance to a Prince is an Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty, or calling him Master; he does not pretend that these two Cases are not parallel, nor dare he say, that calling a Man Master in the religious Sense, is not directly contrary to Christ's express Inhibition to his Disciples. 'Tis strange that a Man should not have a Word to say against either of these Things, and yet should pretend to justify this Practice.

To say that where any Kind of Obedience is due, the Performance of it may properly be secured by the Solemnity of an Oath, is (1) Nothing to the Purpose; for I have proved that all Ministers of the Gospel are, by divine Institution, equal; and therefore no one of them owes Obedience to another. It is (2) contrary to the Sense of Mankind. There are

are a Variety of Cases in which one Person is obliged to obey the lawful Commands of another ; wherein yet no Man ever tho't it proper or reasonable to oblige himself by the Solemnity of an Oath. For Instance, the *Constable of Rye* has a lawful Authority in some Cases, to command Mr. *Wetmore*, and he is obliged by the Laws of his Country to obey him : Yet should the Constable require him to take a solemn Oath to obey his lawful Commands, I fancy Mr. *Wetmore* would think, “ a *Rebuke for his Insolence the properest Answer to be given him*” ?

I called this Submission of Presbyters to Bishops in the Church of *England*, a *servile* one. And tho' I take no Pleasure in the Use of *harsh Epithets*, I yet think it ought to be so filed. No *Servant* is, or can be under a *stronger* more solemn Obligation to his *Master*, than what arises from his *having Sworn* to obey him : No Obligation to Obedience can possibly be more *extensive* than that which reaches to all Things lawful and honest ; nor can any Servitude be more *durable* than to be obliged to obey a Man and his Successors.

The last Thing to be debated under this Head, is the *Presbyters Preaching by Virtue of the Bishop's Licence*, and not merely by Virtue of Christ's Commission, which he is vested with in Ordination. Mr. *Wetmore* is more out of Temper at what I have said on this Head, than at anything else that occurs in all my *Sermon* ; and yet he begins his Answer to it by saying “ *He is too trifling to deserve a serious Answer*”, p. 22. But what an *odd-temper'd Gentleman* is he to be put into such a *Rage* by a *Trifle* ? But however, if I did not deserve a *serious Answer*, it seems he tho't I deserved an *angry* one. He charges me, in the same Page, with “ *Trifling and Falshood*” with “ *such glaring Falshood and Prevarication*” as “ *must expose me to Shame and Reproach*” ; he says I have “ *most wickedly falsified*” the Canons of the Church ; that I write “ *after another as wicked and false as my self*”, and as if he had not yet said enough to reproach me, or sufficiently vented his own Ill-nature, he adds, “ *I charge him boldly with gross Prevarication and Falshood, done with a wicked Intent*”.

and” To all which I answer, A Person ought to be very sure he is in the Right, and that he has sufficient Evidence to justify him before he brings so heinous and aggravated a Charge against any Man; not only because, if his Evidence fails him, his own Character must greatly suffer in the Opinion of all Mankind, but chiefly because the divine Law forbids *Defamation* or *bearing false Witness against our Neighbour*, and requires such a *Reparation* in Cases of this Nature as is not easily made.

I can hardly think Mr. *Wetmore* would have charged me at this Rate, if he had not *supposed himself* in the Right; and yet it is not so easy supposing a Man so well acquainted with the Canons as he ought to be (for he is obliged to read them publicly in the Church once every Year) so ignorant of the true State of this Matter. For it is evident from the Canons,

1. That some Ministers of the Church of *England* are *allowed* and required to preach the Gospel, and others, tho’ *ordained* and beneficed too, are *forbidden* to do this. CAN. 45.
 “Every beneficed Man *allowed to be a Preacher*, &c.--shall--
 “preach one Sermon every Sunday of the Year”. CAN. 46.
 “Every beneficed Man, *not allowed to be a Preacher*, shall
 “procure Sermons to be preached in his Cure once in every
 “Month---by Preachers lawfully licensed”. Here it must
 be observed, that a *beneficed Man* means what we in this
 Country call a *settled Minister*, one that has the solemn Charge
 of a particular Parish, and a legal Right to the Incomes of it
 for his Support. And of these beneficed Men the *Canon*, you
 see, speaks of some as being *allowed*, and of others as *not allowed*
to be Preachers. Nay further, an *unlicensed Minister* is ex-
 pressly *forbid* to preach, even in his own Parish, CAN. 49.
 “No Person whatsoever---not licensed---for a sufficient or
 “convenient Preacher, shall take upon him to expound in
 “his own Cure; or elsewhere, any Scripture or Matter of
 “Doctrine, but shall only study to read plainly and aptly
 “(without glossing or adding) the Homilies”. The Per-
 son

son here spoken of has a *Cure*, that is, the Charge of a particular Parish, yet he is absolutely forbid preaching to his own People, and required to confine himself to the Reading of the Homilies, in the doing of which he may not undertake to explain anything he reads, how much soever it may need Explanation, for he must read them without *glossing or adding*.

2. The *having a Licence* is what gives the former Sort of Ministers a Right or *legal Authority* to preach the Gospel; and the *not being licensed* is the Reason why the latter *may not preach*. Thus the Matter is express'd in the *Canons* already cited; *If he be allowed to be a Preacher, he shall preach, and if he be not allowed to be a Preacher, he shall procure Sermons to be preached by such as are lawfully licensed Preachers; and if he be not licensed for a Preacher, he shall not expound in his own Cure or Parish, but only read the Homilies, just as they are printed.* The 50th Canon plainly puts a Minister's *Authority* to preach upon the Foot of his *having a Licence*, "Neither the Minister, Church-Wardens, &c. shall suffer any Man to preach ---but such as by shewing their *Licence* to preach shall appear unto them to be sufficiently authorized thereunto". If Ministers of the Church of *England* preached properly by Virtue of their Ordination, shewing their *Letters of Orders* would be evidencing that they were sufficiently authorized to preach; but the Canon will not admit this as Evidence hereof. And should Mr. *Wetmore* be prosecuted in a spiritual Court for preaching, the best Certificate of his having been episcopally ordained would signify Nothing towards justifying him, if he could not produce a *Licence for Preaching*. If there be anything further necessary to prove that it is the *Licence*, and not *Ordination*, that gives the proper *legal Authority* to preach as Ministers of the Church of *England*, I would refer you to *CANON 54.* the Title of which is, "*The Licences of Preachers refusing Conformity to be void*"; and which concludes in these Terms, "*We determine and decree, that the Licence of every such Preacher shall thereupon be utterly void and of none Effect*". And will only ask Mr. *Wetmore*, Whether a
Preacher

Preacher whose Licence is adjudged and declared void and of none Effect, has, this notwithstanding, Authority to preach as a Minister of the Church of England?

3. The Reason why some of the Ministers of the Church of England are not licenced to preach, is, *because they have not the proper Qualifications of Preachers*, or Ability to preach. If the Church licences some Ministers for Preachers, and requires them to preach; and refuses a Licence to others, and requires them to confine themselves to the bare reading of the printed Homilies; it must be supposed, that she does this because she is sensible that some of her Ministers are not fit to be allowed Preachers. And the Convocation say plainly enough that this was the Reason they acted upon, CAN. 57. "Whereas divers Persons---do refuse to have their Children
"baptized by a Minister that is no Preacher, and to receive
"the holy Communion at his Hands---as tho' the Virtue of
"those Sacraments did depend on his ABILITY TO PREACH
"---We require and charge every such Person---to reform,
" &c.---both the said Sacraments being equally effectual,
"whether ministred by a Minister that is no Preacher, or by
"one that is a Preacher". The Canon finds no Fault with these Persons for supposing these *unpreaching Ministers* were really destitute of Ability to preach, but only for thinking their Want of this Ability rendred the Sacraments they administred ineffectual; and accordingly refusing to receive them; which is in Effect allowing that these Ministers *really had not Ability to preach*, and that on this Account they were not licensed to it. Now from hence it follows,

4. That an *Ability to teach* or preach the Gospel is not necessary to Ordination in the Church of England. If the Church allows an *unpreaching Ministry*; if she designs Men should be admitted into the Ministry, and allowed as Ministers to read Prayers and Homilies, and administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but not be permitted to preach, and that because they have not Ability to preach; it would be

a strange Contradiction indeed, if after all, an Ability to preach were required as a necessary Qualification, in all that are admitted into the Ministry by Ordination. To what Purpose should an *Ability to teach* be insisted upon, or enquired after, in a Man that is not designed to be a Preacher, but only an *Homily-Reader*? Or rather, if none were ordained but such as were capable of Preaching, why should not all ordained Ministers be allowed to preach without any subsequent Licence? Either therefore the Church of England egregiously contradicts herself, or else Mr. *Westmore* mistakes her Sense, when he represents the Book of Ordination and the 34th Canon as contradicting what I had asserted. The Canon he quotes, does as he says, require that the Person to be ordained “*be able to yield an Account of his Faith in Latin, according to the Articles---and to confirm the same by sufficient Testimonies out of the Holy Scriptures*”. And this, rightly understood, does not contradict what I before said from Mr. *Pierces*. To give an Account of their Faith according to the Articles, means no more than to repeat the Articles, with a Profession of assenting to them. The 6th Canon requires Ministers to take especial Care that no Children be presented to the Bishop for Confirmation, “*but such as can render an Account of their Faith according to the Catechism*”. Now 'tis evident, from the Office for Confirmation, that this means no more than an *Ability to repeat the Catechism*, or answer the Questions in it. The Person to be ordained must be able to yield this Account of his Faith in Latin; that is, he must be able to translate the Articles into that Language, which every one can do who understands Latin. The Canon further requires, that he be able to confirm the same, by sufficient Testimonies out of the holy Scriptures. Had this Expression been used likewise of the Child to be confirmed, every Body would have understood it as intending the same Thing as we commonly express by a Child's having learnt his *Proof-Catechism*. And as the Words in the 34th Canon are capable of this Sense, so they ought to be taken in it; for they are no other Way reconcilable to the other Canons. It may be proper enough

to require that the Person to be ordained, tho' he is not designed to be a Preacher, should be able to name such Texts of Scripture as are generally tho't to prove such and such Articles of the Church; and this he may easily attain to, since there are Editions of the Articles with such Scriptures annexed. But to require proper *Skill in Divinity*, or an Ability to explain and defend the Articles of the christian Faith, as necessary to the Ordination of a Man, who after he is ordained is not to be allowed, even in his own Cure, to expound any Scripture or Matter of Doctrine, but only to read the Homilies, without glossing or adding; would be extremely absurd. I can't find therefore that the *Canons* require any thing more in Point of *Learning* or *Scholarship*, in the Person to be ordained, than that he *understand Latin*, which is what Mr. *Wetmore* is so angry with Mr. *Pierce* for saying, and with me for repeating from him.

It is Mr. *Wetmore's* Business, and not mine, to reconcile the Forms used in Ordination to these *Canons*. If they contradict one another, I can't help it; and I am not, on that Account, to be charged with Falshood; for I never said they were not contradictory. I allow that the Bishop in ordaining a Presbyter, uses such Expressions as are sufficiently descriptive of the Gospel Ministry, the Office which our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted in his Church; and in which, I have before proved, there is but one Order. This "*high Dignity*", this "*weighty Office and Charge*" into which the Person is called, is the very same in which the Bishop himself stands, and the Person thus ordained, is, by Christ's Institution, equal to him that ordained him. But now I can't think it consistent with his Duty to Christ or his Church, or with his own solemn Vows and Engagements, the Charge he has received, or the Account he must give at last, for the Person thus ordained, to submit himself to the Bishop, so far as to take an Oath of canonical Obedience to him, and a Licence to preach the Gospel from him, making himself thus entirely dependent on him, and rather the *Bishop's Servant* than *Christ's Minister*. 'Tis really surprizing to me, to observe

serve to what a prodigious Degree the *Imparity* between Ministers is carried in the Church of *England*. Presbyters, notwithstanding the *lofty Expressions* used in ordaining them, are considered but as a Kind of *Deputies* or *Journeymen* to the Bishops. In the Morning Prayer to be said daily throughout the Year, you pray for the Clergy under the Name of *Bishops and Curates*, and the same Expressions you use in the Evening Prayer, and so in the Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church militant on Earth, in the Communion Office. Now if the Word *Curate* be taken in it's *largest Sense*, for any one that has the *Charge of Souls*, the Bishop himself is one. But when it is taken in it's *limited Sense*, for one that discharges an Office for another (as it must be here taken, because it is used as a *Term of Distinction*) it means much the same Thing in *ecclesiastical Affairs* as a *Deputy* does among *civil Officers*, or a *Journeyman* among *Mechanicks*.

This Subjection of some Ministers to others, evidently appears to me *Servile* in it's Nature, and directly contrary to an expresse Command of Christ. And I cannot see how those who thus degrade themselves from the Office in which Christ has placed them, and incapacitate themselves for the Services he requires of them, can expect his Blessing on their Labours at present, or to give a good Account to him at last, of the Powers he gave them, and they, by a sinful Submission to others, rendered themselves incapable of exercising. This I think proves the *Unlawfulness* of forsaking our Churches and joining in that Communion; for it is (with Regard to this Country) to embrace a Communion in which the Ministers have, or at least can exercise but one half the Powers, Christ has given his Ministers, and arrive at the Right of exercising that Half by such a mean and servile Submission to others as Christ has plainly forbid.

Thus I have finished this Part of the Controversy, without being at all convinced by Mr. *Wetmore's* Arguments, or intimidated by the Expressions of his angry Resentments; and I hope, without being ruffled by his abusive Treatment. And

I leave his own Conscience to say, what Reparation he ought to make, both to Mr. *Pierce's* Memory and to my Character.

II. The unhappy State of *ecclesiastical Discipline* in the Church of *England* at Home, and the total Want of it in the episcopal Congregations in the Plantations, render it *unlawful* to forsake our Churches and go over to that Communion.

Ecclesiastical Discipline is generally acknowledged to be an Institution of Christ, and a very important one too; absolutely necessary to the *Well-being* of the Church. If therefore we have such a Discipline as Christ has appointed, and the Episcopal Assemblies in this Country are destitute of it; you must allow that you have acted a *sinful* Part in separating from us, and joining in Communion with them. I shall not spend Time in describing the Discipline practised in our Churches, which you are not unacquainted with; nor in shewing the Agreeableness of it to the Precepts and Examples of the New-Testament; I have done something of this Kind in my *Sermon*, to which Mr. *Wetmore* has made no Objection. But shall give you an Account of the *unhappy State* of Discipline in the Church of *England*, and then shew, That after all Mr. *Wetmore's* Pretences, there is no such Thing as Discipline in your Assemblies in this Country.

I don't desire you to take my Word with Regard to the State of Discipline in the Church of *England*; but shall take the Account of it from a *Clergyman* of that Church, Mr. *John Heldrop*, Rector of *Wath* near *Rippon* in *Yorkshire*; who published a Discourse entitled, *The Contempt of the Clergy considered*, in the Year 1739. In which is the following Account of this Matter, (p. 173, &c.) “ The present DEPLORABLE STATE OF RELIGION AMONG US, is not to be
“ denied or defended. The universal and indeed unavoidable
“ RELAXATION of Discipline, and the scandalous ABUSE
“ even of that SHADOW of it that remains, gives us but a
“ melancholly Prospect for the growing Generation. There
“ are

“ are (’tis true) yet to be seen in our *Rubrick* and *Canons*,
“ such Words as *Discipline*, *Censure*, *Admonitions*, *Penance*,
“ *Excommunication*; sufficient Indications of a Power once
“ claimed and exercised by the Governours of the Church.
“ But alas! they stand there now as the melancholy Ruins
“ of an old Fortress long ago demolish’d, untapable of
“ the least Defence against the Enemies of Religion. The
“ *Rubrick* to the Communion-Service directs every Cler-
“ gyman to admonish and repel from the Communion
“ Men of vicious and scandalous Lives, and the Church-
“ Wardens are bound by their Oaths to present such Of-
“ fenders, that they may be punished. But considering
“ the present State of Things, a Man must have the Courage
“ of a *Martyr* that dares put these Laws in Execution. Sup-
“ pose, for Instance, that the greatest Reprobate in the Ci-
“ ty, were for some peculiar Kind of Merit, preferred to
“ any good Office, ecclesiastical, military or civil, and should
“ offer himself to receive the Communion as a *Qualification*;
“ What, in such a Case, shall a Minister do? If he admit
“ him, he is FALSE TO HIS CANONICAL OATH; if he
“ refuse him, he is liable to be sued in an Action of *Tres-*
“ *Hundred Pounds*, which may perhaps be the immediate
“ Ruin of his Family. If not that, it exposes him however
“ to the keenest Resentment of the Person so refused, and by
“ Consequence to the Vengeance of those great Men who
“ had been the Authors of his Promotion. I remember, in
“ the latter End of *QUEEN ANNE*’s Reign, such a Case as
“ this: The Clergyman apprehensive of the Snare, applied
“ himself to the Bishop of the Diocese (with whom I was
“ then in Company) to know how to behave on such a try-
“ ing Occasion. O (said the Bishop), you must without
“ Doubt follow the Direction of the Canon and Rubrick.
“ But, My Lord, (said he) I know the Temper of this
“ Man so well, that I am sure he will sue me; and if he does,
“ he will ruin me. I cannot help that (said the Bishop)
“ the Rubrick and Canons are your Rule. But, My Lord!
“ (said he) Will you use your Interest above to indemnify
“ me,

“ me, in Case I should be condemned to pay the Penalty ?
 “ I cannot (said he) promise myself or you any great Suc-
 “ cess, if I should attempt it. Why then (said he) I must
 “ comply even AGAINST MY OATH AND CONSCIENCE.
 “ Let me rather fall into the Hands of a merciful God,
 “ than into the Hands of an unbelieving unforgiving Repro-
 “ bate. Was not this an HARD CASE ! And may not this
 “ be the the Case of *every Clergyman in England* ! And is there
 “ no Remedy ! Can there be no Medium between DAMNING
 “ and STARVING ? How must the *Infidels* laugh in their
 “ Sleeves, to hear the learned Writers and Preachers of our
 “ Church, talk of spiritual Authority, the *Power of the Keys*,
 “ which every *little dirty Fellow* in an Office shall defy you
 “ to execute ? For Shame, let us be consistent ; either re-
 “ peal your CANONS or your ACTS OF PARLIAMENT”.
 Thus I have given you a Description of the State of Disci-
 pline at this Day in the Church of *England*, in the very Words
 of a Clergyman of that Communion. The Description is
lively and Affecting ; and his Reflections on it are *just and*
natural. And you see all the Clergymen of the Church of
England will not agree with Mr. *Wetmore* in saying, that
 “ the Immorality, Atheism and Prophaneness of the present Age,
 “ can’t be imputed to any Defects in the Constitution of the
 “ Church of *England*”. And if there be, as Mr. *Hildrop*
 says, “ but a melancholy Prospect for the growing Generation”
 in *England* upon this Account, how much more black and dis-
 mal will the Prospect be for our Posterity in this Country,
 should that Communion be generally embraced here ? For,
 If there be but a *Shadow of Discipline* in the Church in
England, there is still less, if indeed there can be less, in the
 episcopal Assemblies in this Country. In Answer to what I
 had objected under this Head in my *Sermon*, Mr. *Wetmore*
 tells us of a Discipline exercised in the episcopal Congregations
 in *America*, gives us some Account of the Nature of it, and
 attempts to reconcile it to the Constitution and Principles of
 the Church of *England*.

I have already considered how *arbitrary and tyrannical* the
 Discipline he pleads for is ; and am now to shew, that you
 cannot,

cannot, consistently with the Constitution of the Church of *England*, exercise any Discipline at all in your Assemblies. The Advocates for the Church of *England* commonly make Ordination and Government peculiar to Bishops; and accordingly I find the Bishop of *Oxford* in his *Sermon before the Society*, p. 32. thus reckoning up the Advantages that would follow upon sending Bishops into *America*, “*Had they Bishops there, Persons might be ordained without the Inconveniences of a long Voyage.---The primitive and most useful Appointment of Confirmation might be restored; and an orderly Discipline exercised in the Churches*”. His Lordship, it seems, thinks you as really destitute of an *orderly Discipline*, as you are of *Confirmation* and *Ordination* in your Churches; and that there is no Way to remedy this, but by sending over Bishops. Tho’ for my Part, I can’t see that the Bishop himself has, according to the Practice of the Church of *England*, anything to do with the Discipline of the Church; this is managed in the spiritual Court, by a *Lay-Chancellor*, appointed indeed by the Bishop, and acting in his Name, but not under his Direction, nor liable to be controled by him. The Presbyters, instead of having any proper Power of Discipline, are by Law obliged to receive and publish the Censures pronounced by this *Lay-Chancellor*. And when the old Puritan Ministers in the Church attempted to exercise Discipline upon their scandalous Parishioners, they were severely punished for it, by the spiritual Courts. This was the Case of Mr. *Cartwright*, mentioned in my *Sermon*.

In Opposition to this, Mr. *Wetmore* tells of a Commission to be found in the *Form for ordaining Priests*, authorizing them to exercise Discipline. And if this were Fact, the Consequence would be, that the Church gives them Authority and forbids them to exercise it, nay, and punishes them if they presume to use it, in the Case of Discipline as well as in that of Preaching. And why should Mr. *Wetmore* be so very fond of taking all Opportunities of representing the Church of *England* as acting so absurd and ridiculous a Part as this? I find *Discipline* but once mentioned in the Passages
he

he has given us from the Form of Ordination; and then the Exercise of it is restrained by these Words, "*as this Church and Realm hath received the same*": Now for a Priest to exercise ecclesiastical Discipline, as the Church and Realm of *England* has received it, is to publish and execute the Censures of the spiritual Court; or at most, it can mean no more than that he suspend a scandalous Person for *fourteen Days*, and certify the Cause into the spiritual Court within that Term; for neither the Canons nor Rubricks allow him to proceed farther than this.

Mr. *Wetmore* says that the Priest in this Country can't be obliged to notify the Ordinary in fourteen Days, because it is impracticable, p. 28. And thus far he is undoubtedly in the Right, for no Man is obliged to Impossibilities. But he is greatly mistaken if he thinks he may therefore suspend for a longer Term, or suspend and not notify the Ordinary; nay, or that he may refuse to admit a Person to the Communion when the Case is such that he cannot certify the Ordinary within that Term. The Rubrick to the Communion Office, after giving the Minister Authority to refuse the Sacrament to Persons in the Cases there named, adds these Words, "*Provided that every Minister so repelling any--shall be obliged to give an Account of the same to the Ordinary, within fourteen Days after at the farthest. And the Ordinary shall proceed against the offending Party according to the Canons*". The Rubrick does not design the Minister shall inflict any proper Censure upon the Person; this is reserved to the Ordinary, and in Order to it, the Man must have a legal Tryal; the Judge must proceed against him according to the Canon. The Minister is only to prepare the Way to this, by suspending the Person, and informing the Ordinary. And that the Priest may not abuse this Power to the Oppression of the Laity, he shall always be obliged to inform the Ordinary in fourteen Days at farthest. But now an unlimited Suspension is a proper Censure, and differs very little, or rather nothing at all, from the lesser Excommunication; which is not to be inflicted without a legal Trial, nor by any Person but the Judge in the

the spiritual Court. Now how absurd is it for Mr. *Wetmore* to argue, that because “ *the limited Time is impracticable to be complied with, and the Design of referring the Cause to the Hearing of the Judges appointed not taking Place,---such Affairs are left with the Minister to determine according to his best Prudence*”, p. 28. when the Rubrick gives him no Authority to try or censure the Person? This is just as if a Man should argue, that because a *Justice of Peace* may imprison a Murderer in order to his having a legal Trial, therefore he may himself try and execute him.

And besides, is Mr. *Wetmore* really so ignorant of the Nature and Design of PROVISOS, annexed to Laws, as not to know that if the Law cannot be executed and the *Proviso* observed, it can't be executed at all? If a Law were made for inflicting a certain Penalty for Drunkenness, provided the Person were convicted within *three Days* after the Crime was committed; Would Mr. *Wetmore* say that a *Justice* might inflict the Penalty on a Man who was not bro't before him 'till the *fourth Day*, because the *Proviso* was impracticable; for the Man kept concealed 'till the *three Days* were elapsed? If so, Why mayn't he go one Step further, and if a Man agreed to sell him a Farm, *provided* such a Gentleman would be bound with him for the Payment of the Price agreed on, insist on it that the Man was obliged by the Bargain to let him have the Farm and take his own Bond for the Money; because the *Proviso* was become impracticable by the Gentleman's utterly refusing to become his Surety.

In a Word, The *Ordination-Office* limits the Priest to exercise the Discipline of Christ “ *as this Church and Realm hath received the same*”, the *Rubricks* and *Canons* are the Laws of the Church, according to which the Clergy are sworn to yield Obedience. Now these give the Minister no Authority to try and censure any Person; nor do they authorise him to suspend in order to Trial, unless he inform the proper Judge

Judge within fourteen Days, that the Person may not continue in this State of Suspension, but be speedily acquitted or condemned. The Scheme of Discipline therefore which Mr. *Wetmore* proposes, as it is inconsistent with the *religious Liberties* of Mankind, and contrary to the Gospel, so it is repugnant to the Constitution and Laws of the Church of *England*; and consequently if any of your Ministers act in this arbitrary Manner, you are under no Obligation as *Christians* or as *Churchmen* to submit to their Censures. And on the Whole, there is not, according to the Principles of the Church of *England*, so much as the *Shadow* of ecclesiastical Discipline in the episcopal Churches in *America*. And this renders it *unlawful* to forsake our Churches and go over to that Communion, in which 'tis impracticable to exercise that Discipline which Christ has instituted in his Church, and which is so essentially necessary to the Well-being of it. But I proceed to say,

III. For particular Members of the *New-English* Churches to separate from them, and join in Communion with the *Episcopal* Congregations, is properly *Schismatical*.

Every particular Church is a Society formed for promoting the Redeemer's Glory in the Salvation of Sinners, in such Methods and by such Means as he has appointed for that End. All the Members of such a Society are under very sacred Obligations to endeavour, according to their several Places and Capacities, to promote this End; and that in *Conjunction* with one another. The Church, considered as a Body, has a Right to the Service of every Member, for carrying on the Designs for which it was formed, by the Means Christ has instituted. I limit the Church's Authority, and consequently the particular Members Obligation to the *End* Christ has appointed and the *Means* he has prescribed for attaining it; because I believe him to be the only *Law-giver* in the Gospel Church; and therefore can't acknowledg any Man

Man or Body of Men, as vested with a *legislative* Authority in the Church, or having a Right to enact *new Ends* of Church Communion, or prescribe *new Means* for obtaining the End Christ has appointed.

The Body of a Man is perfect when it has all it's Parts in their due Proportion & Activity, and every Organ or Member discharges it's proper Function for the Good of the Whole: But when any particular Members separate themselves from the Rest, and refuse to act agreeably to their several Places in the Body and their mutual Relation to one another; as (for Instance) *If the Foot shall say, because I am not the Head, I am not of the Body*, and shall thereupon refuse to act as a Member of the Body; or if *the Head shall say to the Feet, I have no need of you*, and shall reject and cast them off as not being Members of the Body, in either of these Cases, the Unity of the Body is dissolved. The Apostle uses this very Comparison to illustrate this Case, 1 Cor. xii. 12,-----27. And this Division of the Members of the same Body, he expressly calls a SCHISM, Ver. 25. On this Authority many learned Men, and among others, the celebrated Mr. Hales, define Schism by *an unnecessary Separation from that Part of the visible Church of which we once were Members* †. Others make Schism to be an *uncharitable Separation*. This seems likewise to be suggested by the Apostle, when he mentions the *Eye's saying to the Hand, I have no need of thee*; and the *Head to the Feet, I have no need of you*, Ver. 21, which Words as applied to the Members of Christ's mystical Body, are expressive of an haughty, contemptuous and uncharitable Conduct of one towards another. This then seems a plain and full Account of the Matter. Every Division or Separation in the Church is *material Schism*; that is, it is a Disuniting of those Members which once have been, and still ought to be, united in the same Body. And a Separation which is *unnecessary*,

† Vide *White's Defence*, p. 29.

and attended with *uncharitable* Expressions and Conduct towards those Men divide from, is *formal Schism* ; and by this Men contract, what Mr. *Wetmore* and I agree to call, the *awful Guilt of Schism*.

I am not aware of anything in this Description of Schism Mr. *Wetmore* will be likely to except against, unless it be my following Mr. *Hales* in making it consist in *forsaking* a Church, which supposes a Person's having been *actually* in Communion with it. This Mr. *White* faults in it, and will have it that it is Schism to live in a State of Separation from that Church which a Man ought to be in Communion with, tho' he never actually was so. And tho' I apprehend Mr. *Hales's* Definition may be justified from the Apostle's Discourse on this Head ; yet since a good Cause allows of a generous Conduct, and mine in particular will bear the largest Concessions that can reasonably be desired, I will not contest this Point ; but allow that it is the same Thing in this Case, whether a Person were actually a Member of a Church and separated from it, or under evident Obligations to become a Member of it, and obstinately refused the Communion of it.

There is hardly anything more contrary to the Nature of true Religion, or more destructive to the visible Kingdom of the Redeemer, than a *schismatical* Temper, or a Disposition uncharitably to censure and unnecessarily to separate from those with whom we ought to maintain Love and Communion. By this, whenever it prevails, the seamless Coat of Christ is rent in Pieces ; nay his Body is dis-jointed and broken ; the visible Church, which ought to appear and behave like the Spouse of the *Prince of Peace*, is rendred a meer Scene of Disorder and Confusion ; and professed Christians, instead of wearing the Livery of Christ, which consists of Love and Meekness, Humility and Peaceableness, are clothed with Hatred and Revenge, Pride and Malice, the very Temper of the infernal Spirits. By these Means the holy
and

and dove-like Spirit is grieved, and so withdraws his special Influences from Gospel Administrations; the awful Event of which is, that the Means of Grace prove a *Savour of Death unto Death*, instead of being, as they were originally designed, the *Savour of Life unto Life*. The Guilt contracted by Schism is great in Proportion to the evil and destructive Consequences which flow from it. Mr. Wetmore says, "If it be every Man's indispensable Duty to be a Christian, the same Duty will oblige him to be and continue a Member of the Church which is his Body, to preserve and maintain the Peace, Order and Unity of the Body, and especially of that Part to which he particularly belongs". p. 37. And I hope this will be attended to more seriously as coming from him". Nay he professes such a Dread of this Guilt, that if he could think it contracted by Persons forsaking our Churches and embracing the episcopal Communion in this Country, he would persuade all against doing it. p. 28. I am glad he has this Tenderness of Conscience in the Case, and as I make no Doubt of proving this Guilt upon you, great and awful as it is, shall rejoice in his joining with me in endeavouring your Recovery out of so dangerous an Estate. And as a Means of this, should be glad he would go on with the Design he mentions, in the Close of his *Defence of Dr. Waterland*, of publishing a Translation of St. Cyprian's Discourse of the Necessity of Church Unity.

That your Conduct in separating from us disturbs the Peace of the Churches you thus forsake, Mr. Wetmore owns, p. 29. "I will allow that Divisions may be in fact made, in such Communities which Men leave, when they go into the Communion of the Church of England in Connecticut. These Societies which they call Churches, may be rent and divided by the withdrawing of some of their Members". Another Concession he makes in these Words, p. 28. "I will allow that making Divisions in, and Separations from regular Christian Societies, with which we are obliged to join in Christian Fellowship"

“*lowship and Communion, is Schism, and very criminal in the
 “Sight of God, and never to be justified or excused before
 “Man”*. These two Concessions are sufficient to fix this
 Guilt upon you ; and I hope will be effectual for convincing
 your Consciences of it. For here you see your own Advocate
 allows, that you were once in Communion with us, and
 have now withdrawn from us, and that in such a Manner as
 in Fact to make Rents and Divisions in the Societies you se-
 parated from ; and that to do this in regular Christian Socie-
 ties---is Schism. These Concessions of his leave you no pos-
 sible Way to prevent this Guilt’s falling with all it’s dreadful
 Weight upon your Heads ; unless you will directly assert
 that the Societies you separated from were not *true Churches*
 of Christ. And I am perswaded that many of you, *my Bre-
 thren*, are not so far gone in a Party Spirit, and so eaten up
 with Bigottry as absolutely to unchurch us and almost the
 whole Protestant World, and declare all our Administrations
 null and invalid. Surely you will not be fond of making
 such a Declaration as this, when you remember that the
 Baptism by which you believe you were, “*made Members
 “of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of
 “Heaven”*” was received in our Churches ; for if our’s are
 not Christian Churches, your’s was not Christian Baptism ;
 and consequently, notwithstanding your having conformed to
 the Church of *England*, you are not Members of the Church
 of Christ. But if, notwithstanding the Consequences of it
 on your own visible Christianity, any of you are determined,
 at all Adventures, to deny our being true Churches of Christ,
 I hope, at least, you will not for the future pretend, that
 your Separation from us has been attended with no Uncha-
 ritableness.

Mr. Wetmore says, “*It will lay upon Mr. Hobart to prove
 “their Societies to be regularly constituted Churches of Christ,
 “before the Guilt of rending the Body of Christ can be fixed up-
 “on Separators from them. This will prove a very hard Task,
 “but*

Episcopal Separation in New-England. 111

" he must go through it, before his Charge of Schism will lay
" against ANY SORT OF SEPARATORS FROM THEM".
p. 29. By " any Sort of Separators", I conclude he means
you, and such as have run into what is commonly called the
New-Light Separation in the Country. You may thank him
(if you think he deserves your Thanks) for appearing in De-
fence of the *New-Light* Separatists, and setting your Cause
and their's on a Level. His doing so gave me the Hint of treat-
ing you and them as standing on the same Foot ; and I had
Thoughts of drawing at large a *Parallel between the New-
Light and Episcopal Separatists*, in Regard to the Principles
they act upon, the End they have in view, the Means they
make Use of, and the Spirit and Temper they are actuated by.
A Thing of this Nature, I apprehend, would have a Ten-
dency to open the Eyes of many deluded People on both
Sides ; but I have not Room for it at present. If Mr. *Wet-
more* would have you and the other Separators think that you
need not fear having the Guilt of Schism charged upon you,
until I prove our Churches regularly constituted ; he imposes
upon you, and you are in Danger of being led into a fatal
Mistake. There are many Things by which you may con-
tract great Guilt, and for which you may be condemned for-
ever, which I have never proved to be sinful ; and if I am as
unable to prove the Sinfulness of them, as Mr. *Wetmore* sup-
poses I am to prove the Regularity of our ecclesiastical Con-
stitution, my Weakness does not alter the Nature of Things,
nor will it excuse you from Guilt and Condemnation. But
if he means no more, by the Passage last quoted, than that I
can't properly bring such a Charge against you 'till I have pro-
ved this ; he discovers a Want of Acquaintance with the Laws
of Argumentation. For it is allowed in all Disputes, that
when a Person is charged with any Crime, if he confesses the
Fact, and pleads anything special in Justification of it, it lies
upon him to prove the special Matter thus pleaded. Mr.
Wetmore therefore, when he had assumed the Province of
vindicating your Conduct, and pleaded in your Behalf, that
the

the Societies you forsook, were such as you had a Right to forsake, or such, the separating from which, was not Schism; ought to have looked on himself obliged to make this Plea good; and 'till he does this, the Charge of Schism lies well against you. But he is so far from doing this, that he dare not directly and openly assert the Fact, that our Churches are such as a Man may separate from without Danger of incurring this Guilt. He seems to have a good Mind to say so, but still his Courage fails him; and he finally contents himself with giving numerous *Hints* and *Suggestions* of this Kind. Thus in the Passage under Consideration, he thinks it "*will prove a hard Task*" for me to prove the contrary, and in the same Page, speaking of our Churches, he says, "*Those Societies, which they call Churches*", intimating that they are not really such; and again, "*If the Congregations, forsaking which is called Schism, are themselves founded in Schism*" &c. To which it is sufficient to reply, That this is a Matter of too great Importance to be decided by such *artful Insinuations* and *hypothetical Propositions*. Two or three IF's won't determine it: But he that would justify your Conduct, must plainly assert, and unanswerably prove, that this is our State.

There is one Passage more in Mr. Wetmore's Piece, which may properly be considered under this Head. p. 40. "*If Imposition of commissioned Hands is necessary, this alone will be sufficient to shew the utmost Irregularity and Confusion in the Connecticut Constitution, which having allowed Lay-Ordination, in the Instance of Messieurs Eliot at Guilford, Buckingham at Seabrook, Chauncy at Stratford, and how many more I know not; from whom the present Sett of Ministers derive their Ordination, at least many of them*". This is what many of you lay great Stress upon; and when all other Arguments fail, you have Recourse to it, as what you suppose fully justifies your Separation from us, I shall therefore consider it fully, and observe

I. Mr.

1. Mr. *Wetmore* has not represented the Fact, in these Instances, exactly as it was. It is difficult gaining a certain Information concerning Facts of so ancient a Date, and of which, so far as I can learn, there are no Records remaining. The best Account I have been able to get, is, Mr. *Eliot* was ordained by Mr. *Whiting* of *Hartford*, and Mr. *Mather* of *Northampton*, the Elder of the Church of *Guilford* laying on Hands in Conjunction with these Ministers. This Account I have from a Gentleman of Note in *Guilford*, who says it was what he had often heard from the most aged People he has conversed with there; and as he is a Man in Years, he must have been conversant with such as well remembered the Fact. In Confirmation of this, I am assured by a Minister now living, that Major *Fitch* of *Norwich*, who has been dead many Years, assured him, he was himself present at Mr. *Eliot*'s Ordination, and saw it performed by a Number of Ministers, and one of the Members of that Church. Mr. *Andrew* of *Milford* has often told a Gentleman of my Acquaintance, that Mr. *Chauncy*'s Ordination was performed by Ministers and the Elder of the Church of *Stratford*. I have conversed with an aged Man at *Stratford*, who remembers Mr. *Chauncy*'s Ordination, but cannot, at this Distance of Time, recollect who the Persons were that laid on Hands. He tells me, that he well remembers Mr. *Blackman*'s being living, and his baptizing a Child when Mr. *Chauncy* preach'd at *Stratford*, and he thinks Mr. *Blackman* lived some Time after Mr. *Chauncy*'s Ordination. This Circumstance strongly argues against a Lay Ordination, for the Clause in the *Cambridge Platform* which speaks most favourably of the Power of the Laity in this Case, allows it only "in such Churches where there are no Elders". I confess I am not so certain that any Minister actually laid Hands on Mr. *Buckingham* at his Ordination. I am informed, from those that have had Opportunity of conversing with such as remembered the Fact, that there was an Ordination Council called. They have been told by the aged People at *Saybrook*, that Mr. *Hooker* and Mr.

Fitch were two of the Ministers that composed the Council. I am farther informed by one of the most aged Ministers in the Country, that Mr. *Mather* of *Windsor* was likewise a Member of the Council, and informed him, that there was a Motion made in the Council to act upon the Clause in the *Platform* above referred to; but he does not remember whether Mr. *Mather* told him the Motion was complied with or rejected, he rather thinks it was rejected. Upon the Whole, the worst that can be supposed in the Case, is that some of the Brethren of *Saybrook Church* did, under the Inspection and by the Order of an ecclesiastical Council, lay Hands on Mr. *Buckingham*, and that thereupon the Ministers present gave him the *Right Hand of Fellowship*, acknowledging him as a lawfully authorized Minister of the Gospel. Now supposing the Facts to be thus, tho' I believe each of the Ordinations to have been, in some Degree, irregular; yet I can't think the most exceptionable of them to be absolutely invalid. I can hardly suppose that Mr. *Wetmore* thinks *Imposition of commissioned Hands* so indispensibly necessary in the Case, that a Bishop who, by Disease or Accident, was entirely deprived of the Use of his Hands, must necessarily loose the Power of ordaining. Nobody, I suppose, looks upon ministerial Authority as such a *physical Quality* as is communicable only by *Contact*. The Imposition of Hands in Ordination, and of "*commissioned Hands*", as it is authorized by the Instances recorded in the New-Testament, I believe ought to be retained in the Church of Christ; nor would I my self be ordained without it: But if any Person who has Authority to ordain be incapable of performing it, or thinks it not necessary and therefore omits it; or if he thinks it may be performed by *Delegation*, and so orders others to do it in his Presence, I dare not say that his Incapacity or his Mistake nullifies the Action, or renders the Ordination invalid.

2. These Instances, supposing them to be as bad as Mr. *Wetmore* would have them, can in no Measure justify you in separating

separating from us. I will, for once, suppose that each of these was a *merely Lay Ordination*; and that the Persons thus ordained had no Sort of ministerial Authority, no more Business to preach the Gospel or administer the Sacraments than any other *Layman* whomsoever. This is all you can desire in the Case, and this, for Argument sake, I will suppose. Now what will this do towards justifying your Separation? These Gentlemen were dead before most of you were born; I suppose long before any one of you forsook our Communion. It was not the Ministry of these Gentlemen that you forsook, but of others, who were ordained by Imposition of the Hands of Ministers. Mr. *Wetmore* does indeed pretend that our present Ministers, at least many of them, derive their Ordination from those Gentlemen, but of this he produces not the least Shadow of Evidence; nor is there any Probability that so much as one Minister in the Country derives his Ordination from these Gentlemen *only*. You all know that Ordinations with us are performed by a considerable Number of Ministers. There is no Probability that these three Men ever joined in the Ordination of the same Person; tho' they might, and no Doubt did, each of them join with other Ministers in Ordinations. In a Word, make this Case as bad as you will, the Argument drawn from it can't excuse any particular Person among you from the Guilt of Schism, unless, before he separated from us, he had *full and convincing Proof*, that the Minister he was about to forsake, derived his Ordination *wholly and only* from these Men; and this, I am confident, there is not a single Man among you will pretend to. So far were you from this, that I dare confidently appeal to your own Consciences, whether you did not act upon *other Reasons* in forsaking us; and when you found those other Reasons were not sufficient to justify you, trump up this Pretence to excuse your continuing in a Separation, which you could not defend on the Principles you acted upon in making the Separation. It was thus with a Number that separated from the Church of Christ in *Norwalk*, they pretended

pretended to be greatly grieved and offended at Mr. *Dickinson's* reading the Scriptures in publick Worship; this they call'd *Popery*, and for this they exhibited their Complaints against him; and when they could not have him censured for this Crime, they separated from him, and declared themselves of the *Episcopal Communion*. The Men who acted upon this Principle were caressed by the Party they turn'd to, and the *Society* had pompous Accounts sent them of the Growth of the Church. These Persons evidently discovered their Want of Sincerity. The publick Reading of the Scriptures did not offend their Consciences, for they could immediately join the episcopal Assemblies, in which this is always practised. And when these Persons come to be sensible that the Reasons they professed to act upon will not justify them, they have Recourse to this, That Somebody has told them, that he has heard, that there were, almost an hundred Years ago, two or three *disputable* Ordinations in this Country. When in Truth, if these Men could have had their Wills, by procuring a Censure against their Minister for reading the *Bible*, they would no more have been influenced in their Conduct by those old Stories of *Lay-Ordinations*, than they would have been by the Disputes between the Pope of *Rome* and those of *Avignon*; as indeed they were really no more concerned with the one than the other. So dreadfully do Men prevaricate with that God *who cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked*.

But,

3. This can't possibly excuse your forsaking us, and joining with the Church of *England*, because *the Succession of the Ministry in that Church is full as disputable as you can pretend to make it with us*. There would be some Consistency in your Pretence of forsaking us for want of a *regular Succession in the Ministry*, if you could have found and had embraced a Communion in which the Succession was *clear and undisputed*. But you must give me Leave to question your Acquaintance with *ecclesiastical History*, if you suppose there is such a Communion

munion on Earth. I am sure the Succession in the Church of *England* is *very much disputed*. The *Papists* say it was broken at the *Reformation*, and the *Nonjurors*, that it was so at the *Revolution*. And 'tis past all Doubt with me, that, on the Principles you generally embrace, 'tis impossible to give a fair Answer to either of them. You have been taught, and in your Disputes with us on this Head you profess to believe, That it is *essential to a lawful Minister* of Christ, that he derive his Commission in an *uninterrupted Succession* from the Apostles; that is, that every Man in the direct Line of Succession between any present Minister and some one of the Apostles, was regularly and lawfully ordained. And it is another of your Principles, That when the ministerial Commission is thus regularly given, it cannot be taken away by any other Authority than that which gave it.

Upon these Principles it will be not only "*a very hard Task*", but absolutely impossible to justify the present Ministry in the Church of *England*. The *English* Reformers had very different Notions of these Things, and acted in a Manner not to be justified on these Principles. And indeed, however fond a Set of hot Men, who have been distinguish'd by the Name of *High-Flyers*, and who have always been suspected of having a strong Inclination to return to the *Romish* Communion, may have been of these Notions; yet the Church of *England*, as a Body, has on many Occasions acted in Defiance of them; so often that there is no such Thing as justifying the present Ministry in that Church, without giving up these Principles.

If we look back to the glorious and happy *REVOLUTION*, which secured you and us in the Enjoyment of all our Liberties civil and sacred, we find *Dr. Sancroft*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Primate and Metropolitan of all *England*; *Dr. Kenn*, Bishop of *Bath and Wells*; *Dr. Turner*, Bishop of *Ely*; *Dr. Frampton*, Bishop of *Glocester*; *Dr. White*, Bishop of *Peterborough*;

Peterborough ; and Dr. Loyd, Bishop of *Norwich*, all deprived in one Day, by Virtue of AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT. Their *Deprivation* bears Date *February 1. 1690* *. These Bishops were not turned out for Heresy, or any other *Ecclesiastical-Crime* ; but for refusing to take the Oaths to King WILLIAM and Queen MARY. And their Places in the Church were soon supplied with others, as though they had been dead. Dr. *Tillotson* being made Archbishop of *Canterbury*, May 31. and soon after, Dr. *Kidder* Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, Dr. *Patrick* of *Ely*, Dr. *Fowler* of *Glocester*, Dr. *Cumberland* of *Peterborough*, and Dr. *Moor* of *Norwich*. This occasioned a Division in the Church of *England*, which continues to this Day, and is likely to remain ; for tho' the deprived Bishops are all dead, yet they and their Adherents took Care to perpetuate the Schism they had made, by continuing a Succession of Bishops in this Line. The *Nonjurors*, or those who adhere to the Succession in the Line of the deprived Bishops, look upon the *Revolution Church*, as they call you, as being in a State of Schism for joining in Communion with, and submitting to the present Sett of Bishops, whom they esteem as Usurpers ; because they took the Places of such Bishops as they suppose were unlawfully deprived ; or rather not deprived at all, for they will by no Means allow that an Act of Parliament can deprive a Bishop, who is a spiritual Officer. This Argument has been warmly urged against you by the *Nonjurors* ; and tho' I make no Doubt the Schism lies wholly on their Side, yet I must say, that I see no Possibility of answering their Arguments, without giving up the Principles you espouse when you are disputing with us. And should God, for the Sins of the Nation, ever suffer the *Protestant Succession* to be set aside, you are to expect that the Successors of the deprived Bishops, would be declared the true Pastors of the Church of *England* ; you, and the Bishops

* *Salmons Chronology.*

you submit to, would be look'd upon as Schismatick, and your Ordinations declared invalid ; so that your Clergy wou'd have a Chance for taking another Voyage for Orders.

'Tis true, the *Nonjurors* themselves would get little by such a Change ; for it is but going one Step farther, and we shall find that they and you both are cut off from this Line of Succession you are both so unreasonably fond of. 'Tis a Fact known to all who are acquainted with the History of the *English* Reformation, that when Queen ELIZABETH came to the Crown, the Bishops of the *English* Church were, to a Man, bigotted *Papists*. There was not a single Man of them active in the Reformation, and only *Kitchin* Bishop of *Landaff*, that would submit to it, when it was established by the Queen and Parliament. All the other Bishops of *England* were deprived or turned out of their Offices by Act of Parliament, for refusing the *Oath of Supremacy*. This was the Case of *Heath* Archbishop of *York*, *Bonner* Bishop of *London*, *Tonstal* of *Durham*, *Thursby* of *Ely*, *Bourn* of *Bath* and *Wells*, *Christopherson* of *Chichester*, *White* of *Winchester*, *Watson* of *Lincoln*, *Bayne* of *Coventry* and *Litchfield*, *Oglethorp* of *Carlisle*, *Turnberville* of *Exeter*, and *Poole* of *Peterborough* ; all the other Bishopricks being at that Time vacant, except *Landaff*, the Bishop of which complied and kept his Office †. So great was the Change now made, that, as Mr. *Prince* tells us, from Mr. *Strype*, *Parker*, Queen *Elizabeth's* first Protestant Bishop, was consecrated December 17, and by the 19th of April twenty two Bishops more were consecrated ‡.

Thus you see that, at the Revolution, the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, with five other Bishops, and at the Reformation the Archbishop of *York*, with all the Bishops of the *English*

† *Baker's Chronicle* p. 331. ‡ *New-England Chron.* p. 220.

Church, one only excepted, were turned out of their Offices by Act of Parliament. These are so many Instances of *Lay-Deprivation*, which is as directly contrary to your darling Principles, and as inconsistent with the Notion of an *uninterrupted* Line of Succession as *Lay-Ordination*; for *Laymen* have as much Authority to *make Bishops* as to *unmake* them. That the *Line of Succession* was broken, in these Instances, is very clear; for if Dr. *Sancroft* continued Archbishop of *Canterbury*, notwithstanding his being deprived by Act of Parliament, which all who deny the Validity of *Lay-Deprivations* must say; all the Consecrations in the World could not make Dr. *Tillotson* lawful Archbishop of *Canterbury* while *Sancroft* lived. So that if the *Consecrations*, in these Instances, were ever so *canonical* and undisputed, yet the Succession would be broken by these Bishops being put in the Places of such as were deprived by those who, according to your Principles, had not Authority to deprive them.

But further, it is at least very questionable, whether the the Bishops who succeeded those deprived at the Reformation were regularly ordained. The famous Story of the *Nag's-Head Consecration* is a full Match for what you so often tell us of the *Leather-Mitten Ordination*; with this Advantage on our Side, that there is no Probability that any one of our Ministers derives his Ordination from Mr. *Chauncy* of *Stratford*; but it is certain that all your's derive from Dr. *Parker* of *Canterbury*. But to take the most favourable Account of this Matter, Archbishop *Parker*, who consecrated all the Rest of the Protestant Bishops, was himself consecrated by *Barlow*, *Scory*, *Coverdale* and *Hodgkins*, as Mr. *Neal* tells us from the Life of *Parker* *. These Men had been Bishops in the Reign of EDWARD VI, but were legally deprived in Queen MARY's Reign, and had never been restored; and it is, at

* History of the Puritans Vol. I. p. 142.

best, very doubtful whether they had Authority to act as Bishops while they lay under a Sentence of Deprivation. The Reformers seem to have been sensible of some Imperfection in this Matter, and endeavoured to have prevented or cured the Lameness of it. For, in the first Place, a Bill was brought into Parliament for restoring these deprived Bishops, but it did not pass †. Then the Warrant for *Parker's* Consecration was directed to *Tonstal, Bourn, Pool and Kitchen* four of Queen *Mary's* Bishops, together with *Barlow* and *Scory*, two of the deprived Bishops, but the old Bishops refused to act, whereupon a second Warrant was granted ‡ and executed by the deprived Bishops before named. And after all an Act of Parliament was procured to confirm *Parker's* Consecration about seven Years after it was performed †. Thus the Consecration of the first Protestant Bishop in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, on which all the Ordinations in the Church of *England* to this Day depend, appears to have been a very doubtful and disputable Thing; such an one indeed as can never be justified upon your Principles. You have therefore no Choice left you, but either to acknowledge that the Principles you have lately been taught are wrong, or else to confess, that the Reformation, and the present Ministry in the Church of *England*, are utterly unjustifiable.

I would further observe here, That in the Beginning of the Reformation, Bishops took Commissions from the King, the Form of them, as Bishop *Burnet* assures us, was this,
 “ That the King appointed such an one to be Bishop during his
 “ natural Life, or so long as he behaved well: And gave HIM
 “ POWER TO ORDAIN or deprive Ministers, to exercise ec-
 “ clestiaſtical Jurisdiction--- And this they were to do IN THE
 “ KING'S NAME, AND BY HIS AUTHORITY ||. And

† *Burnet's* Abridg. Vol. II. p. 330. † *Ibid.* p. 337.

‡ *Neal* Vol. I. p. 142. || Abridg. Vol. II. p. 178.

tho' Bishops don't at this Day take out such a Commission, yet the King appoints the Person, for the *Dean and Chapter* are obliged, under very severe Penalties, to choose the Man the King names to them.

You have been taught, and I suppose generally believe, that the Ordinations performed in the Church of *England*, are universally allowed to be good and valid, and that even the Church of *Rome* don't pretend to deny them. But they who tell you so, are either themselves ignorant of the Matter, or have a Design to impose upon you. I don't desire you to take my Word in the Case, but will give you full Proof. Bishop *Burnet* informs us, that in the Book of Ordination set out by King *EDWARD VI*, the Form of consecrating Bishops, and ordaining Priests, was almost the same with that now used in the Church of *England* §. And yet he tells us, that in Queen *MARY's* popish Reign, Ordination performed according to this Book “*was declared to be NO VALID ORDINATION*” †. He says further on this Head, “*They carried themselves as if they esteemed those Orders to be of no Force; and therefore they did not degrade those Bishops or Priests that had been ordained by it*” *. To understand this, it is proper to observe, That the Church of *Rome* always acts upon this Principle, That the Civil Magistrate has no Authority over the Person of a Clergyman. When therefore such an one is condemned of Heresy or any other capital Crime, they always degrade him from whatever Orders he has taken in the Church; and being thus entirely stripped of his sacred Character, and made a meer Layman, he is turned over to the secular Arm to be put to Death. “*Conferring Orders, and Degradation from them, are performed in a Manner and with Ceremonies directly contrary to each other. For when Orders are conferred, they begin from the lowest till they gradu-*

"ally rise to the highest"; Thus a Man is first ordained *Deacon*, then *Priest*, and then *Bishop*: But when they degrade a Man, they begin with the highest Order he has taken, and proceed gradually to the lowest; thus reducing a *Bishop* to a *Priest*, and so downward, 'till he is divested of all Clerical Orders. The several Steps taken and Ceremonies used in Degradation, may be seen at large in *Limberch's History of the Inquisition*, Vol. II. p. 265, &c. Upon this Principle and in this Manner the Papists acted in Queen *Mary's* Reign; accordingly *Cranmar* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and *Ridly* Bishop of *London* were degraded in a very formal Manner, before they were executed; because these Men had been consecrated in the popish Form, and so were esteemed lawful Bishops. But when *Hooper* Bishop of *Glocester* came to suffer he was degraded only from the Order of a *Priest*, for they did not esteem him a Bishop †. The Reason was this, *Hooper* was ordained Priest before the Reformation, and his Priest's Orders being thus valid, it was necessary he should be degraded from them before he could be delivered as a Layman to the civil Magistrate to be executed: But his Consecration as a Bishop was after the Reformation, and performed according to King *Edward's* Book, and this was judg'd *invalid*; tho' *Cranmar* and *Ridly* whom they owned for lawful Bishops, were the Men that consecrated *Hooper* ||.

This must, I think, convince you, that you are far from getting clear of disputed Ordinations by leaving us and joining with the Church of *England*. Their Ordinations are in Fact as really disputed, and as absolutely denyed as our's are; and the Principles you insist upon to invalidate our Ministry will effectually destroy your own. And therefore the Pretence of two or three *Lay-Ordinations* in the early

† Ibid. p. 252.

|| *Neal's Hist. Purit.* Vol. I. p. 70.

Days of this Country, were the Facts ever so well proved, can in no Sort justify nor excuse you in separating from us and joining with the Church of *England*, because the Case is full as bad with them as with us. Your Separation from us therefore, after all Mr. *Wetmore* has offered in your Vindication, appears to have been *entirely unnecessary*; such an one for which you had no sufficient Grounds or Reasons; and therefore such an one as can't possibly be justified before God or Man.

Nothing more can be requisite to shew that your Separation is properly schismatical, unless it be to prove that it has been and is attended with *Uncharitableness*. Mr. *Wetmore* has, I think, said nothing on this Head. And indeed any Pretence of Charity towards us, would appear strange in a Man, who, for twenty or thirty Years past, has rendred himself famous for his *hard Speeches* concerning us and our excellent Fore-fathers, his *uncharitable Censures*, and *unjust Condemnations* of us and them. But some others of your Advocates have attempted to excuse themselves from the Guilt of Schism, by pretending that their Separation was not an *uncharitable* one. Thus Dr. *Johnson* endeavours to clear himself, “*My Departure from you, my Brethren, (says he) has never been attended with a Spirit of Severity, Censoriousness or Uncharitableness towards you*” †. This was written some Years ago, and I am heartily sorry the Doctor has since cut himself off from the Benefit of this Plea for the future; for surely there is something that looks very much like *Severity, Censoriousness* and *Uncharitableness* in that Suggestion of his, That the Being we worship “*is not the God of Israel, nor the God of Christians*” ‡. If the Object of our worship be not the God of Christians, he is the God of the Heathen,

† Second Letter to dissent. Parish. p. 46. ‡ Letter to Mr. *Dickinson*. p. 14.

the God of this World; if he be not the God of Israel, he must be the God of *Ekyron*.--- But there is no need of heightening the Features of this horrid and monstrous Infamation, I therefore leave it to shine in it's own native Ugliness,--- tho' I can't forbear lamenting it, that Party Principles and Schismatical Practices, should carry a Gentleman of a good Temper and polite Behaviour, to such an Excess of Uncharitableness, as I think cannot be parallel'd by the wildest and most extravagant Enthusiast the late Years have produced !--- The Charge of Uncharitableness is easily made good against the Generality of you. How common is it with you to declare that our Ordinations and Administrations are invalid, and that, tho' you yourselves have no Baptism but what you received among us? Are there not many of you who teach your Children that were baptized with us, that in Baptism they were "*made Children of God, Members of Christ, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*", and yet at the same Time endeavour to instill into them the Notion that our Baptisms are null and void? Thus rather than fail of being uncharitable to us, you run into the most palpable Contradictions; and represent Christianity in such an absurd Light to your Children, as directly tends to prejudice them against it, and to cause them, when they grow up, to renounce it and turn Infidels. To go on, How many are there of you, who refuse to hold occasional Communion with us in the Word of God and Prayer, who, when you have not Opportunity to attend the Church-Service, chuse rather wholly to omit the publick Worship of God than to join with us in it? If such Persons are not guilty of Schism, I am utterly at a Loss how Men can possibly contract that Guilt. If there be any of you (as I hope there are some) who do not discover an uncharitable and censorious Spirit towards us in any of the Ways I have mentioned, I wish such would seriously consider, whether they are not *Partakers in other Men's Sins* of this Kind, by joining in Communion with them, and countenancing, encouraging and hardning them therein.

Upon

Upon the Whole, It appears evident to me, that Men, by separating from our Churches, and joining in Communion with the episcopal Assemblies in this Country, do really contract the awful Guilt of Schism, as their Separation is unnecessary and uncharitable. It will, I hope, tend to convince you of this, if I conclude this Head with the Sentiments of one of our Ministers, for whom, those of you who know him, profess a great Regard, who has been thought to have studied this Controversy with a Mind something inclined to your Side of the Question, and whom you have more than once boasted of as one that was on the Point of declaring in your Favour. This Gentleman was pleased, not long since, to favour me with the *Result of his Enquiries* into this Subject, and the *Reasons* that obliged him to continue in our Communion. Among other Things, he says, “ I should be
 “ guilty of SCHISM in the proper Sense of the Word, should I
 “ break off from our Constitution and join with them. And I
 “ wish this Matter was laid home to them that have done so.
 “ It is astonishing to me, to hear one of our New-England
 “ Gentlemen, who was baptized by a Presbyterian Teacher
 “ (as they affect to call us.) vapouring and swaggering of un-
 “ interrupted Succession, and best constituted Church in the
 “ World, and pronouncing NULLITY upon all our Administra-
 “ tions. This is, with me, perfect Farce and Comedy. The
 “ most raving Enthusiast does not appear in a more contempti-
 “ ble Figure,---BIGOTTRY is too soft a Term to express it
 “ by. And when one of these Gentlemen gravely invites me to
 “ come into the Bosom of the true Church, I dare not look him
 “ in the Face for Fear of laughing ; I dare not ask him where
 “ he was baptized, for Fear of putting him out of Counte-
 “ nance”.

I will add but one argument more to prove the *Unlawfulness* of separating from our Churches, and joining the episcopal Communion, and so conclude my Discourse, which has already run to a greater Length than I designed.

Wherefore,

Wherefore,

IV. Persons separating from the *New-English Churches*, and embracing the episcopal Communion, is the great *Occasion of misapplying the Money given for propagating the Gospel*; and does effectually prevent the *Enlargement of the Redeemer's Kingdom*, and the eternal *Salvation of perishing Souls*.

The *Facts* here asserted are capable of plain and full *Proof*, and the *Consequence* deduced from them is easily justified.

The *SOCIETY for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts*, was incorporated by a Charter granted by King *WILLIAM*, on the 16th Day of *June*, 1701. This Society was formed upon a noble and truly Christian Design. The Charter was granted “ Upon Information, that in many of our
“ *Plantations, Colonies and Factories beyond the Seas, the Pro-*
“ *vision for Ministers was mean, and many other of our said*
“ *Plantations, Colonies and Factories were wholly unprovided of*
“ *a Maintenance for Ministers, and the publick Worship of*
“ *God; and that for Lack of Support and Maintenance of such,*
“ *many of his loving Subjects wanted the Administration of*
“ *God's Word and Sacraments, and seemed to be abandoned to*
“ *Atheism and Infidelity, and others of them to popish Supersti-*
“ *tion and Idolatry*” †. This Charter was by no Means designed to erect a Society to convert *Presbyterians* or *Independants* (as they chuse, though injuriously, to call us) to the Church of *England*. This Party-Design never entred into the Thoughts of that religious Prince who granted this Charter, who was himself bred a *Presbyterian*, and was an illustrious Defender of *religious* as well as *civil Liberty*. The People this Society was to help, were such as “ *wanted the Ad-*
“ *ministration of God's Word and Sacraments, and seemed to be*
“ *abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity*”, and such as were in Danger of being perverted to “ *popish Superstition and Idola-*

† Vide Abstract of the Charter.

“try”. And even with Regard to *these*, the Charter did not oblige or direct them to promote the Church of *England*, but to propagate the Gospel. Dr. Waddington, in his Sermon before the Society, represents the Enemies of the Society as mistaking the true Design of it, when they object, that “not Christianity it self, but the Faith and Practice of one Community only of Christians was to be propagated among the *Heathen*”: And (among other Things) says upon it, “as no such particular Design is mentioned in our Charter, which is given for the Propagation of the Gospel in general,-----this is the End we ought principally to propose to ourselves, and is, I hope, sincerely pursued by all who are concerned in this great Trust for the Good of Mankind” †. ’Tis true (as the Bishop of Oxford observes) “There can be no teaching at all but in some particular Form” ‡. And since (as his Lordship argues) they think their own Form the best, I find no Fault with his saying, “Whoever is taught Christianity by our Care, will be taught it as professed in the Church established here by Law”. And as great an Enemy as you may think me to the Church of *England*, I should sincerely rejoice to see all the *Heathen* in *America* embrace Christianity in that Form of it. May God inspire the Society to engage in the truly Christian Design of converting the numerous Tribes of *Indians* to the christian Religion, and of recovering to a Sense of Religion, those *British* Plantations which are sinking into a State of *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, and have not so much as the Appearance of Religion among them! May they thus be the happy and dignified Instruments in the Hand of Providence, to accomplish the Designs of Divine Grace toward Men, and to fulfill the Promises made to to the Redeemer, that he shall have the *Heathen* for his Inheritance, and the utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession!

This Society has subsisted almost fifty Years, their yearly Expence, so long ago as 1715, amounted to two thousand one

hundred & eighty six Pounds Sterling *. And in the Year 1739 it run up to above *three thousand and eight hundred Pounds* †. I believe it therefore a moderate Computation to suppose, that they have laid out *an hundred thousand Pounds Sterling*, under the Notion of propagating the Gospel in *America*. This vast Sum has been chiefly given by such charitable and pious Persons as supposed it would be laid out in promoting the great Intention and primary Design for which the Charter was granted. And the Society themselves seemed at first to have this in view. Some of the first Sermons preached before them, seem to have insisted principally on this, as I find by Mr. *Millar's* Quotations from them ‡. Bishop *Burnet*, in his Sermon, makes mention of what the People of *New-England* had done towards christianizing the *Indians*, and calls upon those who have a Zeal for the Honour of the Church of *England*, to contribute to raise her Glory, by imitating us. He that considers what great Things have been done by the Society in *Scotland* for propagating *Christian Knowledge*, within a very few Years, and with a small Expence, will surely expect to hear of some large Addition made to the Redeemer's visible Kingdom, by the vast Sums the Society in *England* for propagating the Gospel have collected and expended in half a Century. And it must grieve the Heart of every one that has any Regard to the Honour of the Redeemer, or any Compassion for the perishing Souls of the Heathen, to be told how little has been done. The Case, so far as I can learn, is truly thus, This Society support one *Catechist* for the *Negroes* on their own Plantations in *Barbados*, and another for the *Negroes* in *New-York*. The *Missionary* at *Albany* preaches Part of his Time to the *Mohock Indians*, and there are two *Indians* of that Tribe, hired for very

* *Abstract of their Proceedings for that Year*, p. 48.

† *Bp. of Gloucester's Sermon* p. 31. ‡ *Hist. of the Propagation of Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 400, &c.

small Salaries to teach School. Excepting these small Matters, the numerous Nations of *Indians* that border on the *British* Plantations, are (as far as I can find) wholly left to perish in heathenish Darknes and Idolatry, without any Attempt made by the Society to relieve them. And with Respect to those Plantations "which seem to be abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity", or are in Danger of being seduced to "popish Superstition and Idolatry", How little Care do the Society take of them? I have already mentioned the Case of *Maryland*, which is in the greatest Danger of Popery of any of these Provinces, and receives no Help at all from the Society; and, for Brevity sake, shall now only mention the Case of *North-Carolina*. This Province is allowed on all Hands to be a most irreligious and profane one. Dr. *Bearcroft*, Secretary of the Society, giving an Account of the religious State of the several Plantations, at the Time this Society was erected, says, "In North-Carolina, the Observation of the Lord's Day, and all other religious Duties, seemed to have been quite forgotten: There was no teaching Priest among them, nor ANY APPEARANCE OF RELIGION" ||. This therefore was to be considered as a Place where, for Want of the Administration of God's Word and Sacraments, People seemed to be abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity, and the Society were early and repeatedly informed of the State of this People, and entreated to help them. Dr. *Bearcroft* says, "There were a few not insensible of their DEPLORABLE CONDITION, who laid before the Society their Want of God's Word and Sacraments in a very SERIOUS AND AFFECTING MANNER" †. The Governour of *North-Carolina* wrote to the Society, "That without some due Care be taken, the very Foot-steps of Religion, will in a short Time be worn out there" ‡. These and such like affecting

|| Sermon before the Society, p. 14. † Ibid. ‡ Abst. for the Year 1715 p. 37.

Episcopal Separation in New-England. 181

Representations of the *deplorable Condition* of this People, produced no other Effect than the sending *two Missionaries* to supply this *whole Government*, which had no other Minister of any Denomination in it. In this State that Colony remained for forty Years after the Society was incorporated. Dr. Chauncy speaking of *North-Carolina*, in the Year 1743, says, "I have lately had Information that may certainly be depended on, that there is scarce a Bible to be met with in Multitudes of their Houses, or a Minister for an hundred Miles together. Indeed I can't learn, that there are above two or three Ministers within the Confines of that Government" *. In the Year 1744, Clement Hall, Esq; one of the Magistrates of that Province, went to *England*, represented to the Society the Necessity of a further Supply of Ministers in that Government, and offered himself to take Orders and accept a Mission there. This Offer the Society complied with, tho' they allowed Mr. Hall but *thirty Pounds a Year* || while the Missionaries in *New-England* generally have *sixty* or upward. This is all I can find the Society have done for this *perishing People*. The last Account I have seen of them is in these Words, "The Society are very sensible, that were there more Clergymen and Schoolmasters of the Church of England settled in this Province, they would be very fully, and to very good Purpose employed; and the Governour of the Province hath been made acquainted, that if proper Provision shall be made there towards their Support, the Society are ready to assist them therein" †.

The Society, whatever the Reasons of it are, do not treat all the *British Plantations* in this Manner. The Colony of *Connecticut* has about *an hundred and fifty* Presbyterian or Congregational Ministers in it, the largest Number of Ministers

* Seasonable Thoughts, p. 414. || Abstr. for the Year 1744. p. 41. † Abstr. for the Year 1746. p. 55.

in Proportion to the Number of People, I suppose, of any *British Colony in America*, yet the Society have been so kind as to erect *eight Missions* in it, besides paying *two Schoolmasters* and *one Catechist*, and I can't learn that they ever wrote to the Governour of this Colony, that they would send no more unless the Assembly would make Provision for their Support.

The true Reason why there is so little done for those Places that so greatly need the Society's Help, is because so much is thrown away where it is not at all needed, and indeed, where it does rather Hurt than Good. The Reason why *North-Carolina* is left to sink into Atheism, *Maryland* to become a Prey to Popery, and the vast *Indian Nations* to perish in the grossest Heathenism, is because the large Sums of Money intrusted to the Management of the Society, instead of being employed to propagate the Gospel, are applied to support the episcopal Separation in *New-England*, and other Places, where Christian Churches are already erected, tho' not in the episcopal Form. The Society do in Effect acknowledge this.

“ *In New-England the Number of the Society's Missionaries*
 “ (says their present Secretary) *have been continually in-*
 “ *creasing from their first Institution, and at this Time nine-*
 “ *teen Missionaries are supported by them therein, and could*
 “ *the Society, in PRUDENCE AND JUSTICE to the pressing*
 “ *Desires of the other Colonies, answer the importunate De-*
 “ *mands of this very populous Province for new Missionaries,*
 “ *they must at least double the Number*” †.

I rejoice to find the Society at length convinced, that JUSTICE to the other Colonies will not permit them to increase the Number of their Missionaries in *New-England*. And I hope God will put it into their Hearts seriously to con-

† Dr. Bancroft's Sermon (printed by Order of the Society)
 p. 9.

sider whether it be not really unjust, and an evident Misapplication of the Charity of the Nation, to apply any Part of the Money given for the Propagation of the Gospel, to the Support of a Party in New-England, while so many of the Plantations are really abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity, or left as a Prey to *Romish Priests* and *Jesuits*; and while large Nations of *Indians* bordering upon us, are wholly ignorant of the only true GOD, and have never heard of the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST. And I heartily wish the *Missionaries* in New-England, and those young Gentlemen who are designing to take Missions in this Country, or any other, where the Gospel is already fully preached, would seriously consider what an Appearance they will make at last, and what a Reception they are to expect, when it shall be found that they were supported in Ease and Plenty, by Money devoted to the Propagation of the Gospel of Christ, and spent their Lives (at best) in converting Men from one Profession of Christianity to another, and perhaps from a better to a worse; and that to encrease the Number of their Profelites they carried Party Principles to an uncharitable Length, countenanced uneasy and disaffected Persons, and admitted to the special Privileges of the Gospel those immoral Persons who fled to them to shelter themselves from those ecclesiastical Censures they justly deserved---

But I return

This is, I think, sufficient to shew, that the Increase of the Episcopal Separation in New-England, instead of being an Enlargement of the Redeemer's Kingdom in the World, is really a very great Hindrance to the Growth of it. Had not the Society been diverted from their original Design by your "important Demands for *Missionaries*", what great Advances might have been made toward recovering to a Sense of Religion, those Colonies where there are hardly any Footsteps of it to be found? And how much might have been done towards converting the neighbouring heathenish Nations to the

the Belief and Practice of the Christian Religion? Sure I am, that the Money the Society have expended in supporting Missionaries in *New-England*, is sufficient (with that Blessing which might reasonably have been expected in so pious a Design) to have accomplished great Things of this Nature. Had it not then been much better on the Whole, much more for the Advantage of the common Interest of Christianity, that you had contentedly remained in our Communion, even supposing our Constitution more imperfect than that of the Church of *England*? What Advantages have you derived from the Separation that can countervail the Damage it has done by hindring the Enlargement of Christ's Kingdom, and preventing the Salvation of so many precious and immortal Souls? Is *New-England* become a more religious Country by Means of the Missions that have been erected in it? Fix upon any one Place, and make the Trial. *Stratford* is the oldest Mission in *Connecticut*, the Society have maintained a Minister there for almost thirty Years, and have now a Catechist and Schoolmaster in their Pay. They have in the whole expended in *Stratford* better than twenty thousand Pounds this Currency, a Sum which, if properly applied, might have been the Means of converting an whole Nation of Heathen. But what good Effect has it produced in *Stratford*? Will it be pretended that the People in general are by this Means become more sober and seriously religious? Are there fewer prayerless Families, in Proportion to the Number of People, than there were thirty Years ago? Is the Lord's Day more strictly observed, or the publick Worship more generally attended? Is there less Pride and Extravagance? Are Swearing and Quarreling, Drunkenness and Uncleaness grown more out of Fashion? If all these Questions must be answered in the negative, and the People of *Stratford* are no better in Point of practical Religion than they were before they had a Missionary settled among them, or than in all Probability they would have been if the Society had done nothing for them, it must, I think, unavoidably follow, that there

Episcopal Separation in New-England. 135

there has been no Equivalent produced for the Loss to the general Interest of Religion, occasioned by the Misapplication of this *twenty thousand Pounds*.

I have now gone through what I at first proposed. The Arguments I have offered under each Head, are such as appeared to me *plain* and easy to be understood: And I have endeavoured to set them in such a Light as I thought most likely to *inform* and *influence* you. My own Conscience, on a calm Review, acquits me of having *designedly* misrepresented any Fact, or imposed on you by any fallacious Ways of arguing. These Arguments appear to me fully sufficient to prove that it was neither NECESSARY in Point of Duty, nor PROPER in Point of Prudence, nor indeed so much as LAWFUL for you to separate from us, as you have done; and consequently that you are *in Duty bound* to return to our Communion, which you have sinfully forsaken. And the Arguments offered do, at least, deserve your *calm* and *serious* Consideration. To which if you add such earnest and fervent Prayers to the *Father of Lights* and *Fountain of Truth*, as the Importance of the Affair plainly requires, I shall entertain great Hope of your Condition and Recovery.

You deceive yourselves, *my Brethren*, if you think this a Matter of *very small* Consequence. For besides the great Guilt you have contracted by such an *unnecessary* and *uncharitable Separation*; I can't help thinking you must *now* be in some Degree sensible that your Conduct has had an unhappy Influence on practical Religion in this Country; as well as on the Interests of Christianity abroad in the World; or at least that you must have some Fears that this has been the Case.

Look round you, *my Brethren*, and count the Instances (if indeed you can find any) of Persons who were loose, profane and immoral in their Lives when they forsook us, and are

are become practically religious, or sober virtuous Men by joining the episcopal Separation. Or, if you chuse it, take a View of such as appeared to be religious Persons when they left our Communion, and see if they appear to grow more holy, humble, and circumspect in their Behaviour. Examine your selves, and see what you have gained by this Change. Do you find a quicker and more affecting Sense of your Misery and Danger while under the Guilt and Dominion of Sin? Are your *Desires* of Deliverance more earnest, your *Prayers* more importunate and your *Endeavours* more animated? Do you really appear to your selves more like *Men in Earnest* in this great and important Concern? Or, if you suppose your selves delivered from the Guilt and Power of Sin; Do you find yourselves growing in an habitual Conformity to the moral Perfections of GOD? Do you find that instead of being *conformed to this World*, you are *transformed by the Renewing of your Minds*, so as to approve and obey the good and acceptable and perfect Will of GOD? Do you really think that your Souls are more mortified to Sin, more abstracted from the World, and the Vanities and Follies of it, and more attemper'd to the Services and Enjoyments of Heaven?

It requires evident and very great Effects of this Kind in your selves, and in the Country in general, to excuse your Conduct; for if you and your Families and Neighbours are no better, or but a little better than you and they might have been; if there had been no episcopal Separation in the Country; there is nothing to ballance the bad Effects of that Separation. You must, I think, be now sensible that your separating from us, has been the great Means of preventing the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Enlargement of the visible Kingdom of the Redeemer; as it is the very Thing which has diverted to another Use the Money given with that Design. And can you, without the most pungent Grief and Sorrow, reflect upon it, That you have been the Means

of preventing that *Increase of Honour and Glory* which was promised the REDEEMER, in Consideration of his shedding his precious Blood for Sinners----; That you have prevented, as much as in you lay, the *beneficent Designs of divine Grace* toward the Heathen World----And that probably there are many immortal Souls now in Hell, who (had you contentedly remained in our Communion) might have spent an happy Eternity in Heaven ! If neither the Consideration of the *Glory of GOD and Honour of the REDEEMER*, nor of the *eternal Interests* of your Fellow-men will influence you ; you must not only be Strangers to that exalted and *Godlike Temper* the Gospel is designed to produce in human Minds, but must have cast off all the *tender Principles* of Humanity it self.

But, my Brethren, *I hope better Things of you.* These Arguments were never, that I know of, set in their *proper Light* before your Eyes. And I charitably believe, that many of you would never, *on any Consideration*, have acted as you have done, if you had considered *Matters in this View*, or had the Consequences of your Conduct set in such a Light before you. Surely you would not have dissolved the Union and broken the Peace of our Churches, if you had been sensible that you thereby contracted the dreadful Guilt of Schism. You would not have gone into the *episcopal Separation*, had you been aware of the many *hurtful Consequences* of it with Regard to the *civil and religious Interests* of your Country, and to the Cause of *practical Religion* in it. I cannot believe, with Regard to many of you, that you would ever have joined in *Petitioning* the Society for Assistance, or in receiving Assistance from them, if you had known that every Penny they applied to your Use, was so much lost to the common Cause of Christianity, and prevented the Propagation of the Gospel of GOD YOUR SAVIOUR.

But as these Things have been now set in a plain and (I think) convincing Manner before you ; it may justly be expected of you, that you approve your selves *Lovers of the Glory of the REDEEMER*, and of the Souls of Men, by forsaking the criminal Separation you have run into, and returning to the Communion you have unjustly forsaken. Thus will an End be put to the Schism you have made in this Country, and the unhappy Effects of it on practical Religion be prevented. *New-England* will hopefully remain a Country remarkable for serious and practical Religion. And the SOCIETY for propagating the Gospel, being free from your " *im-
portunate Demands for Missionaries*", will be at Liberty to apply the Charities they are entrusted with the Management of, to those great and good Ends for which they were given. By this Means those *British Plantations in America*, which are sunk or sinking into *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, may be recovered to a serious Sense of Religion, and to such a Behaviour as shall be ornamental to the Profession of it. Those Nations bordering upon us that are now *setting in heathenish Darkness*, and *perishing for want of Vision*, may be brought to rejoice in the *saving Light of the Gospel*. And the whole *Earth be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*.

These are Events so excellent and desirous, that we ought to be ready even to lay down our Lives to forward and advance them. If I am conscious to the Principles of Action in my self, 'tis with a View to promote them that I have engaged in, and carried on this Controversy. And this, I trust, will support me under any Abuses or ill Treatment I may meet with on the Account of what I have now written.

I have nothing to add but my earnest Prayers to that
GOD who has the Hearts of all Men in his Hands, that
he will be pleased to influence you to such a Conduct
as shall subserve the promoting these Designs of his Grace
toward a sinful and perishing World; and that he will
own and bless these my weak Endeavours for this Pur-
pose.

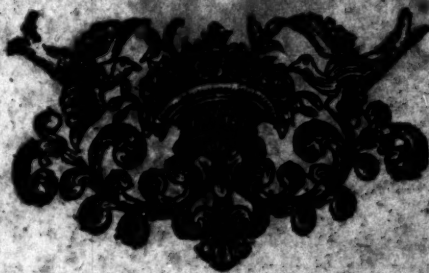
And am,

Your sincere Friend

and

Well-wisher,

N. Hobart.



189. Separation in New-England.

I have no more to add but my earnest prayers to that
God who has the hearts of all men in his hands, that
will be pleased to bestow wisdom to lead a conduct
that shall please the Father of the Church, and that he will
bestow wisdom for this purpose.



And am,

Your sincere Friend

and

W. L. Chapin

M. Hobart

